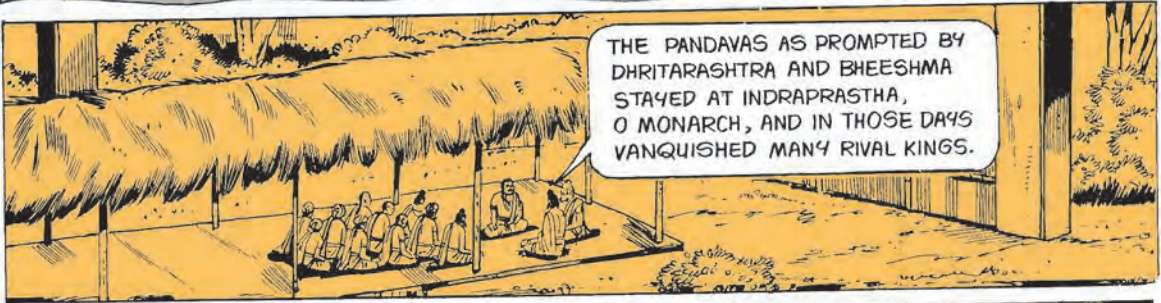


Mahabharata - 15

A HALL FOR YUDHISHTHIRA



THE PANDAVAS AS PROMPTED BY DHRITARASHTRA AND BHEESHMA STAYED AT INDRAPRASTHA, O MONARCH, AND IN THOSE DAYS VANQUISHED MANY RIVAL KINGS.

" THEN ONE DAY, ARJUNA SAID TO KRISHNA:



THE DAYS ARE WARM, LET US GO TO THE YAMUNA WITH OUR FRIENDS AND RETURN IN THE EVENING.

" THEREUPON KRISHNA SAID:

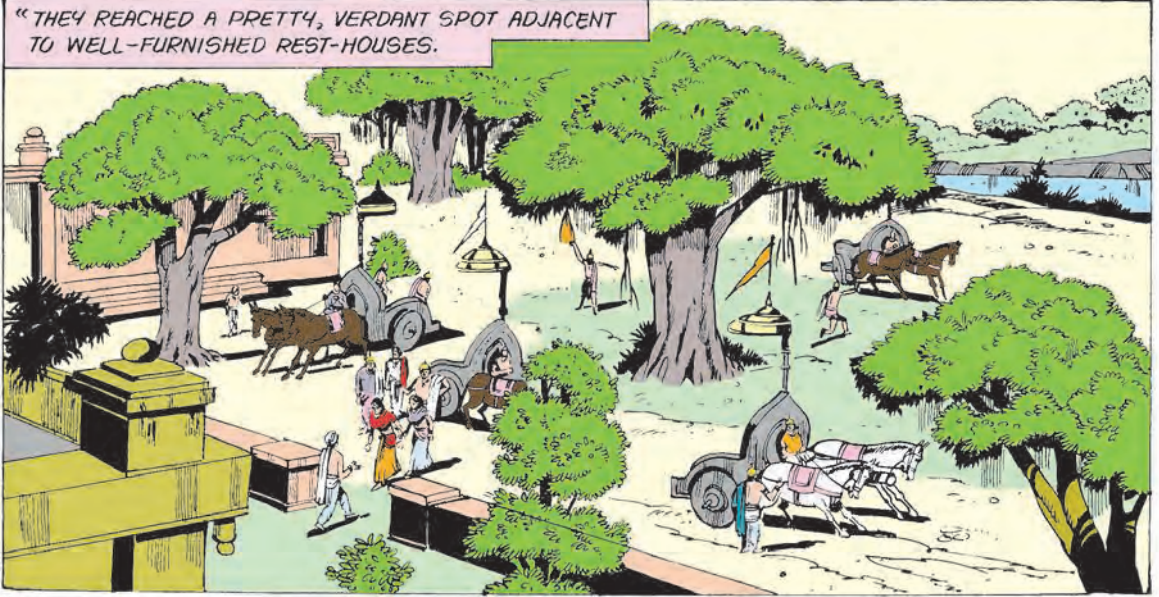


THAT WOULD PLEASE ME TOO.

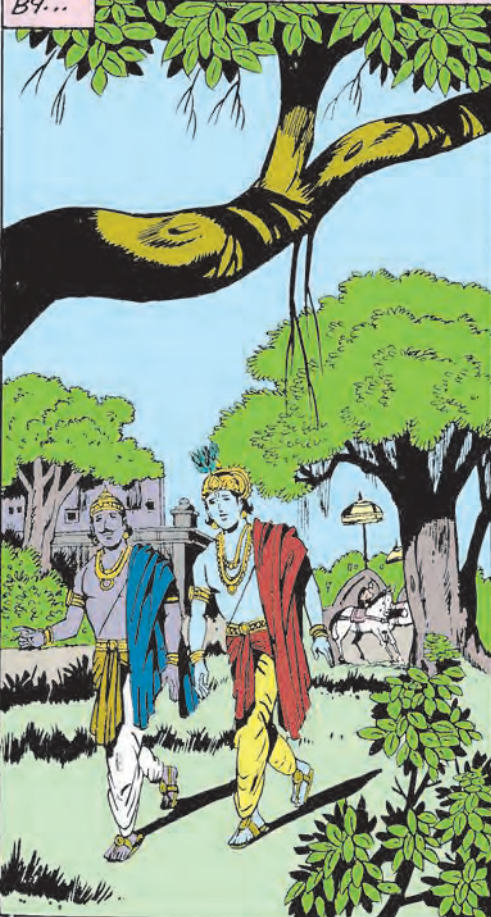
" THEN, O MONARCH, ARJUNA AND KRISHNA, WITH YUDHISHTHIRA'S PERMISSION, SET OUT IN THE COMPANY OF THEIR FRIENDS.



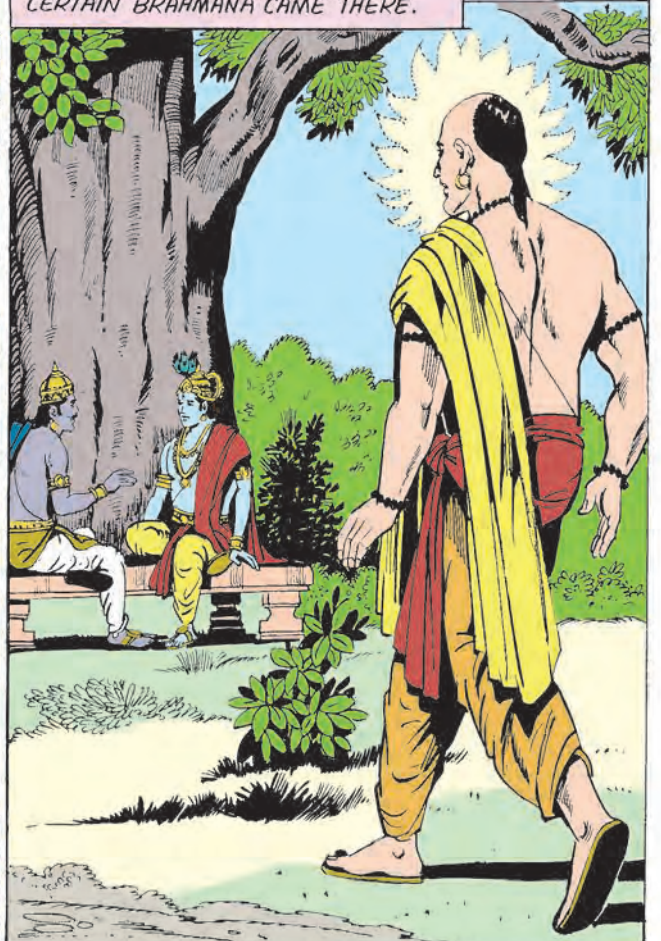
"THEY REACHED A PRETTY, VERDANT SPOT ADJACENT TO WELL-FURNISHED REST-HOUSES."



"WHILE ALL REGALED THEMSELVES AS THEY CHOSE TO, ARJUNA AND KRISHNA PROCEEDED TO A DELIGHTFUL SPOT NEAR BY..."



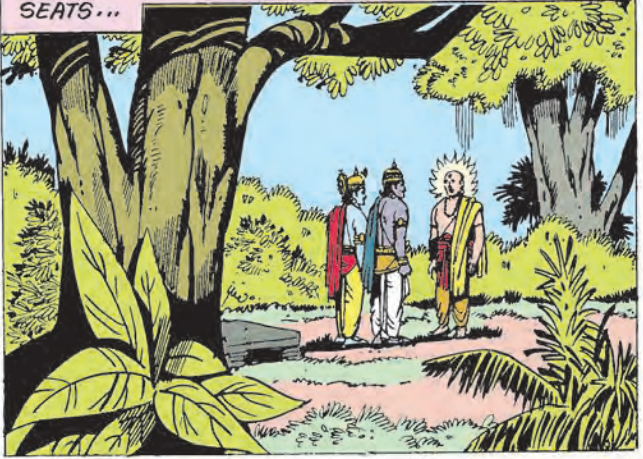
"...AND AMUSED THEMSELVES WITH RECOLLECTIONS OF THEIR HEROIC ACHIEVEMENTS. IT WAS THEN THAT A CERTAIN BRAHMANA CAME THERE."



"BEHOLDING HIM WHOSE VISAGE WAS RESPLENDENT LIKE BURNISHED GOLD..."

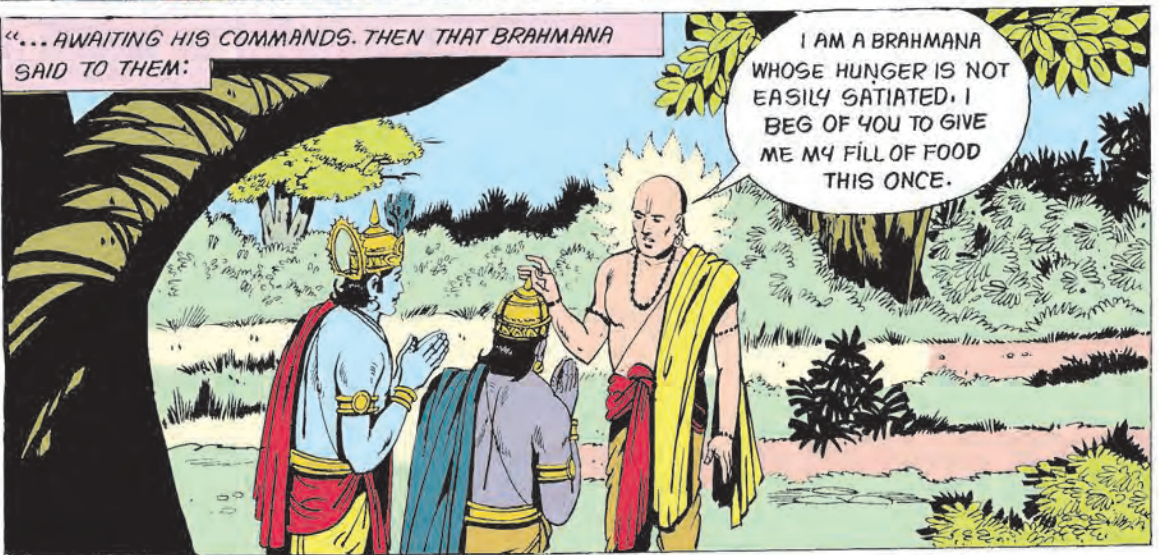


"...ARJUNA AND KRISHNA ROSE HASTILY FROM THEIR SEATS..."



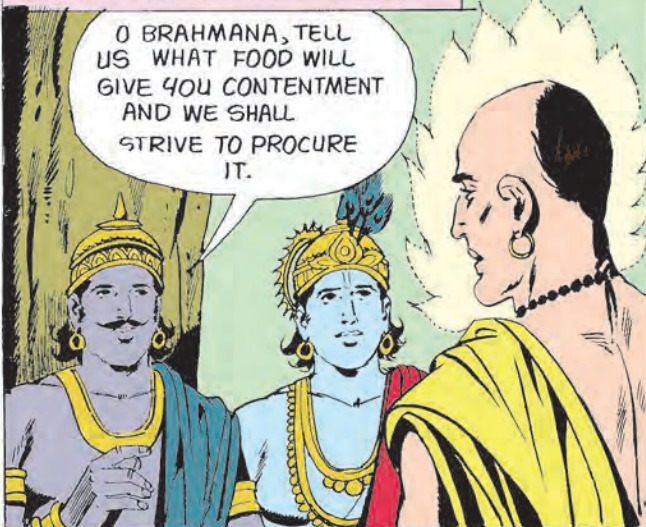
"...AWAITING HIS COMMANDS. THEN THAT BRAHMANA SAID TO THEM:

I AM A BRAHMANA WHOSE HUNGER IS NOT EASILY SATIATED. I BEG OF YOU TO GIVE ME MY FILL OF FOOD THIS ONCE.



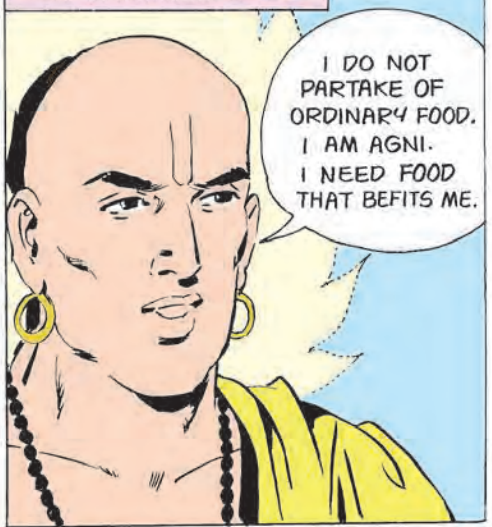
"ARJUNA AND KRISHNA REPLIED:

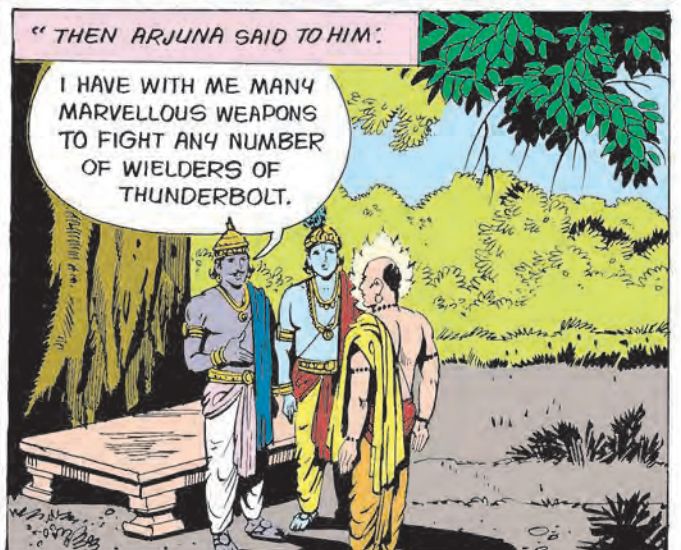
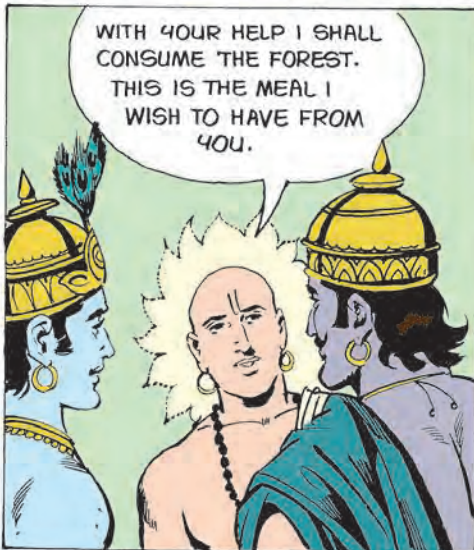
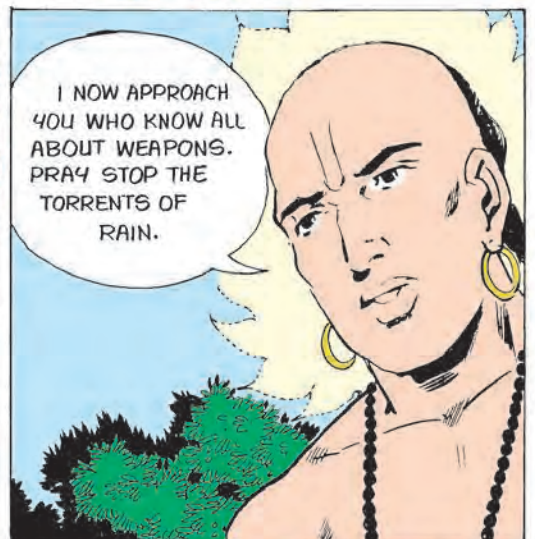
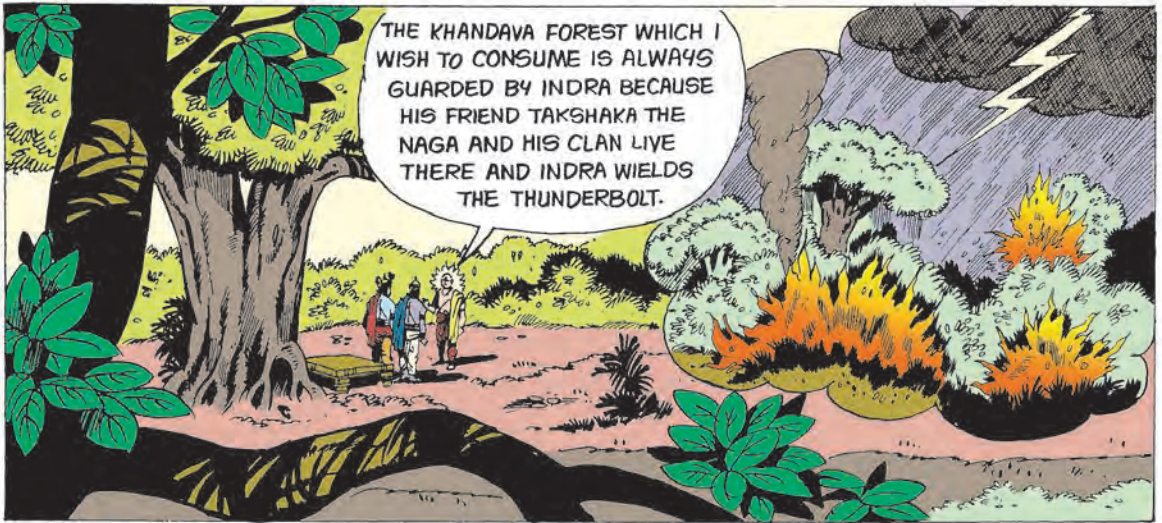
O BRAHMANA, TELL US WHAT FOOD WILL GIVE YOU CONTENTMENT AND WE SHALL STRIVE TO PROCURE IT.

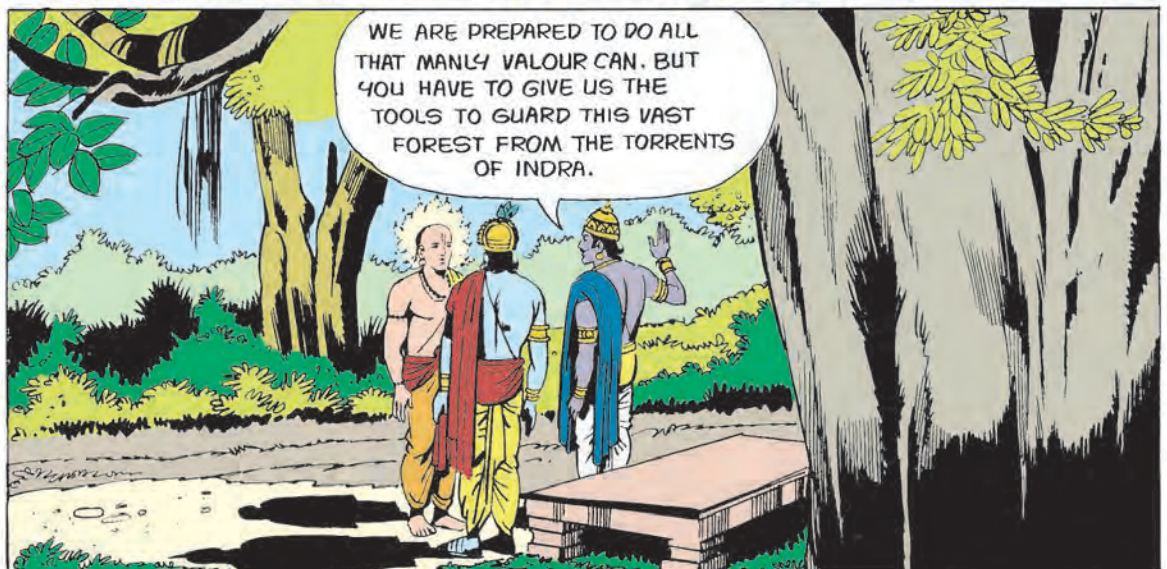
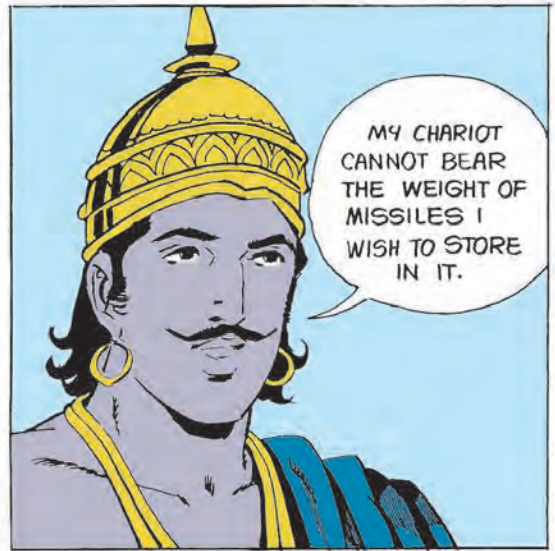


"THE BRAHMANA SAID:

I DO NOT PARTAKE OF ORDINARY FOOD. I AM AGNI. I NEED FOOD THAT BEFITS ME.







THUS ADDRESSED BY ARJUNA, AGNI THOUGHT OF VARUNA, THE PRESIDING DEITY OF WATER AND A GUARDIAN OF THE UNIVERSE.

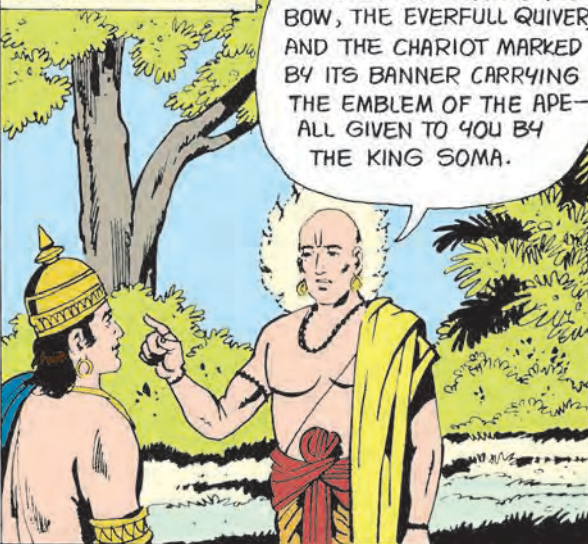


"AND VARUNA, DIVINING HIS THOUGHT, LOST NO TIME IN APPEARING BEFORE AGNI..."

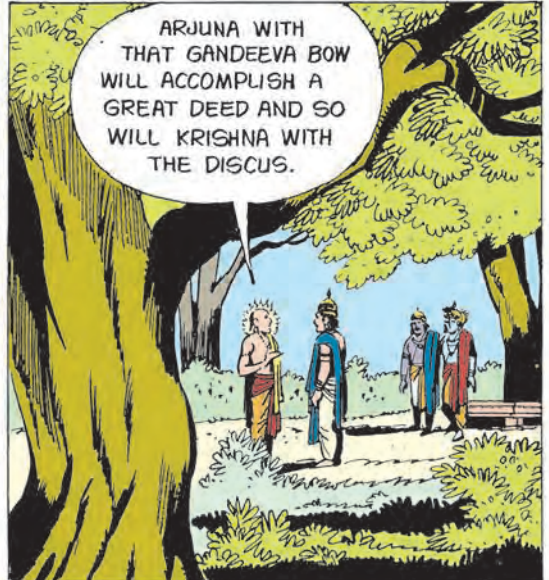


"...WHO SAID TO HIM:

HASTEN AND GIVE ME THE BOW, THE EVERFULL QUIVER, AND THE CHARIOT MARKED BY ITS BANNER CARRYING THE EMBLEM OF THE APE— ALL GIVEN TO YOU BY THE KING SOMA.

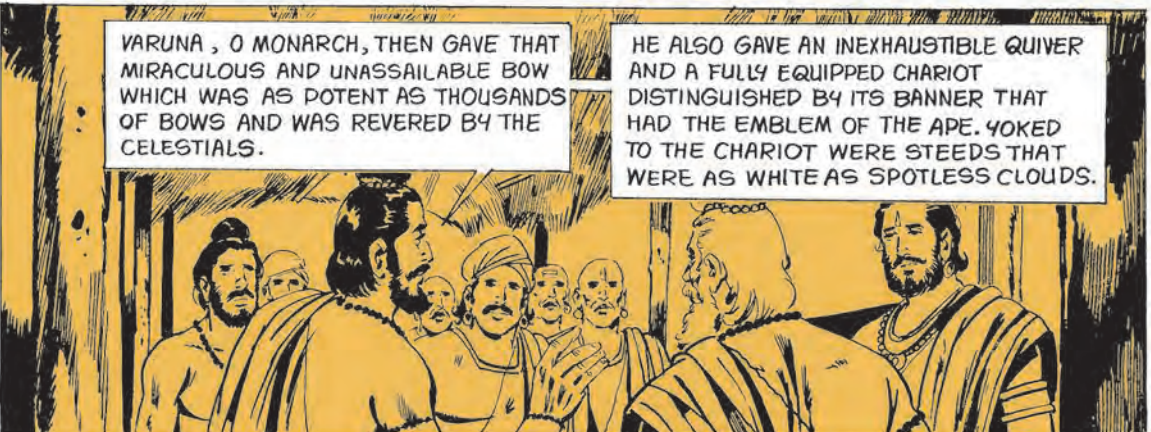


ARJUNA WITH THAT GANDEEVA BOW WILL ACCOMPLISH A GREAT DEED AND SO WILL KRISHNA WITH THE DISCUS.

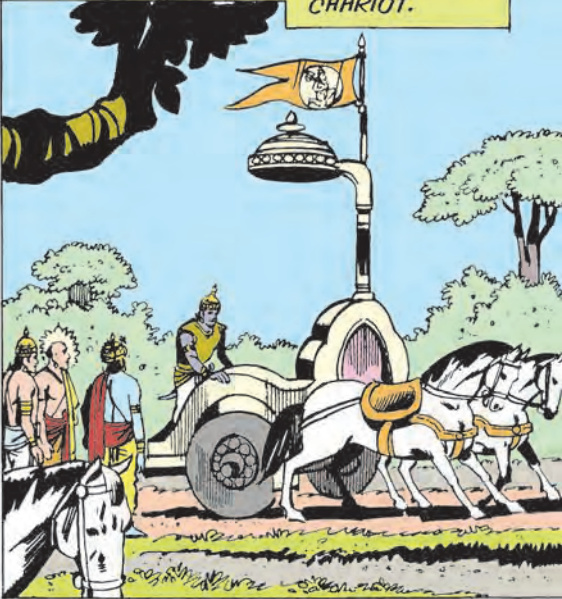


VARUNA, O MONARCH, THEN GAVE THAT MIRACULOUS AND UNASSAILABLE BOW WHICH WAS AS POTENT AS THOUSANDS OF BOWS AND WAS REVERED BY THE CELESTIALS.

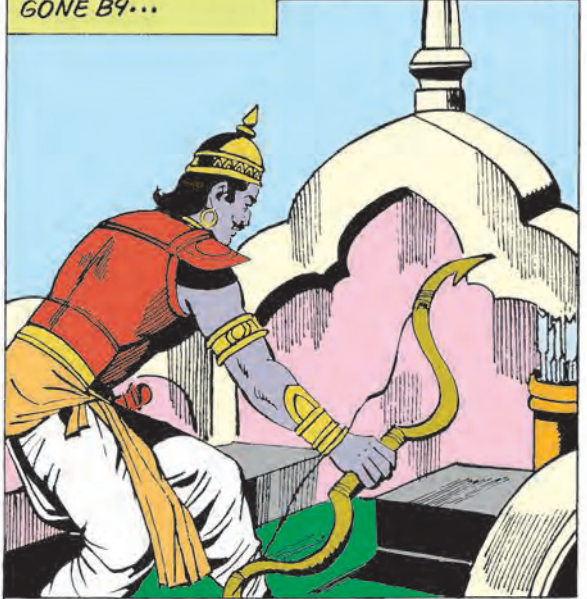
HE ALSO GAVE AN INEXHAUSTIBLE QUIVER AND A FULLY EQUIPPED CHARIOT DISTINGUISHED BY ITS BANNER THAT HAD THE EMBLEM OF THE APE. YOKED TO THE CHARIOT WERE STEEDS THAT WERE AS WHITE AS SPOTLESS CLOUDS.



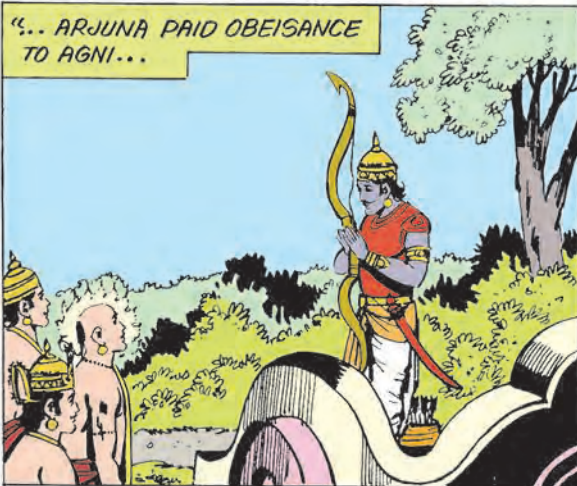
" THEN ARJUNA, CLAD IN ARMOUR AND READY WITH HIS SWORD, ASCENDED THE CHARIOT.



" AND, TAKING UP THAT CELESTIAL BOW CALLED GANDEEVA, WROUGHT BY BRAHMA IN DAYS GONE BY...



"... ARJUNA PAID OBEISANCE TO AGNI...

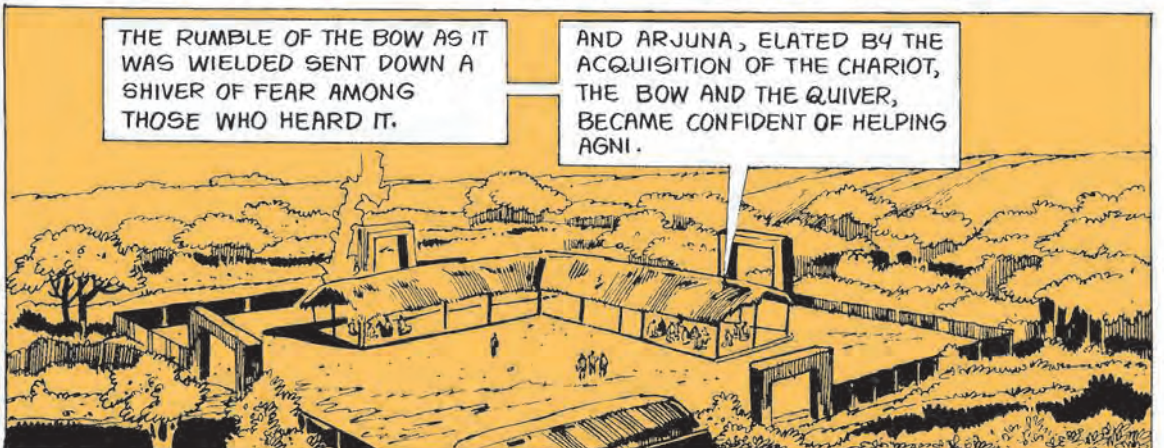


"... AND THEN STRUNG IT.



THE RUMBLE OF THE BOW AS IT WAS WIELDED SENT DOWN A SHIVER OF FEAR AMONG THOSE WHO HEARD IT.

AND ARJUNA, ELATED BY THE ACQUISITION OF THE CHARIOT, THE BOW AND THE QUIVER, BECAME CONFIDENT OF HELPING AGNI.

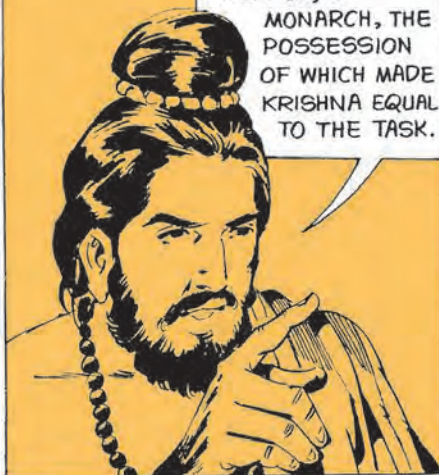


"AND AGNI GAVE TO KRISHNA THE DISCUS WHICH HAD A CENTRE AS HARD AS AGATE, SAYING:

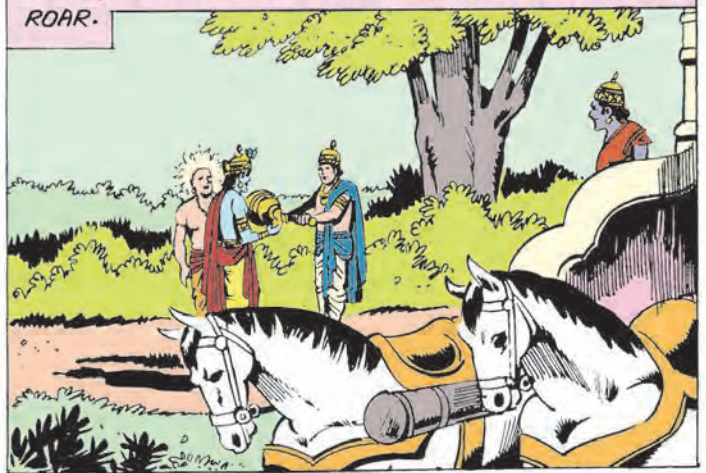
THIS WEAPON
WILL MAKE YOU SUPERIOR
TO MEN AND CELESTIALS.
HURLED BY YOU, IT WILL
DESTROY THE ENEMY
AND RETURN TO
YOU.



IT WAS A FIERY-
WEAPON, O
MONARCH, THE
POSSESSION
OF WHICH MADE
KRISHNA EQUAL
TO THE TASK.

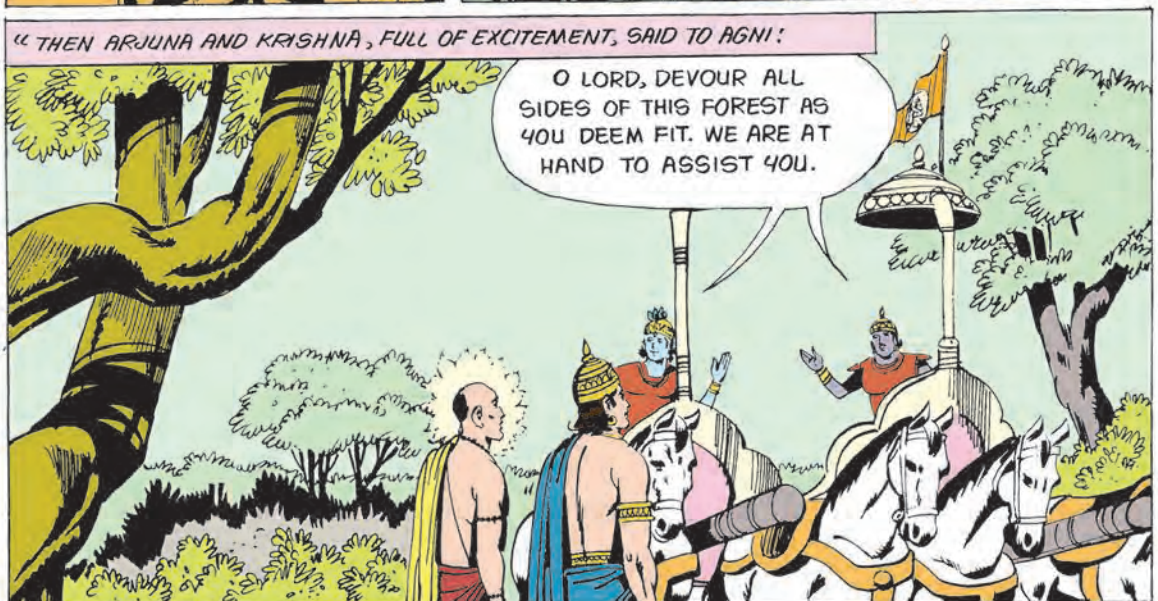


"AND THEN VARUNA GAVE KRISHNA A MACE, KAUMODAKI BY
NAME, WHICH WHEN HURLED SPED WITH A THUNDEROUS
ROAR.



"THEN ARJUNA AND KRISHNA, FULL OF EXCITEMENT, SAID TO AGNI:

O LORD, DEVOUR ALL
SIDES OF THIS FOREST AS
YOU DEEM FIT. WE ARE AT
HAND TO ASSIST YOU.



"AGNI, WHEN ASSURED THUS BY ARJUNA AND KRISHNA, TOOK ON HIS FLAMING FORM. AND KRISHNA AND ARJUNA, RIDING IN THEIR CHARIOTS, TOOK POSITION ON EITHER SIDE OF THE FOREST.



"AS AGNI SURROUNDED THE KHANDAVA FOREST AND STARTED CONSUMING IT...



"... THE WATER-SPOTS BEGAN TO BOIL AND THE LEAPING FLAMES ROSE UP TO THE SKY..."



"... STRIKING FEAR INTO THE HEARTS OF THE CELESTIALS."

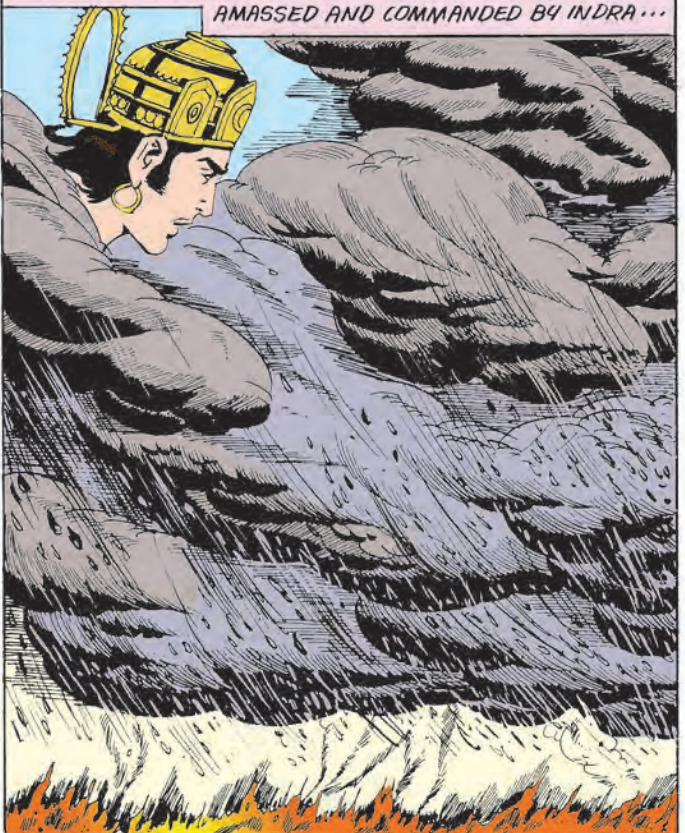


" THEN THOSE IN THE REALMS ABOVE WENT TO INDRA AND SAID :

O LORD, WHY IS AGNI BURNING UP ALL THOSE CREATURES? IS THE WORLD NEARING ITS DAY OF DOOM?



" WHEN INDRA HEARD THIS AND BEHELD FOR HIMSELF THE EVENT, O MONARCH, HE COVERED THE SKIES WITH MULTITUDINOUS CLOUDS. AND THOSE CLOUDS AMASSED AND COMMANDED BY INDRA..."



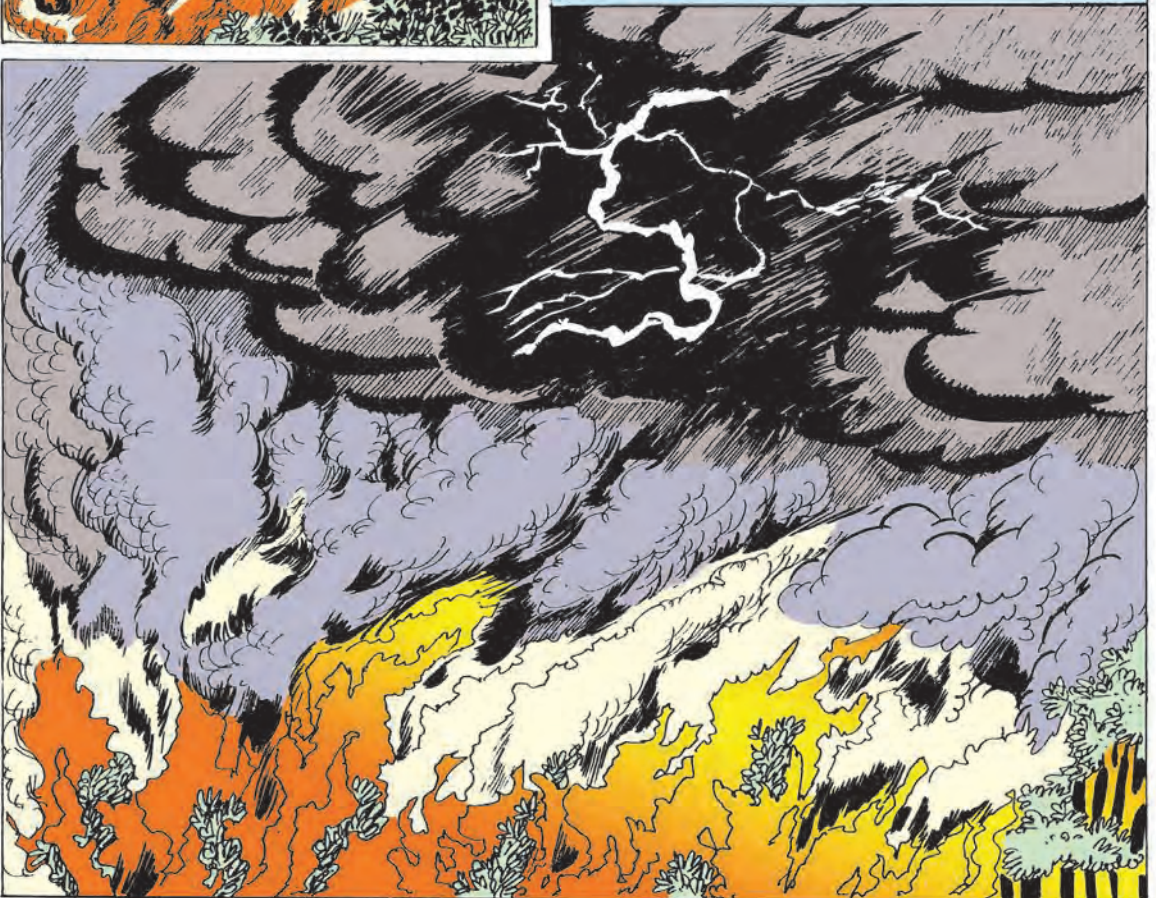
"... BEGAN RAINING DOWN UPON THE KHANDAVA FOREST IN SHOWERS AS THICK AS THE AXLE-RODS OF A CHARIOT. BUT IN THE SCORCHING HEAT OF THE FIRE, THE CASCADES DRIED UP IN MID-AIR.



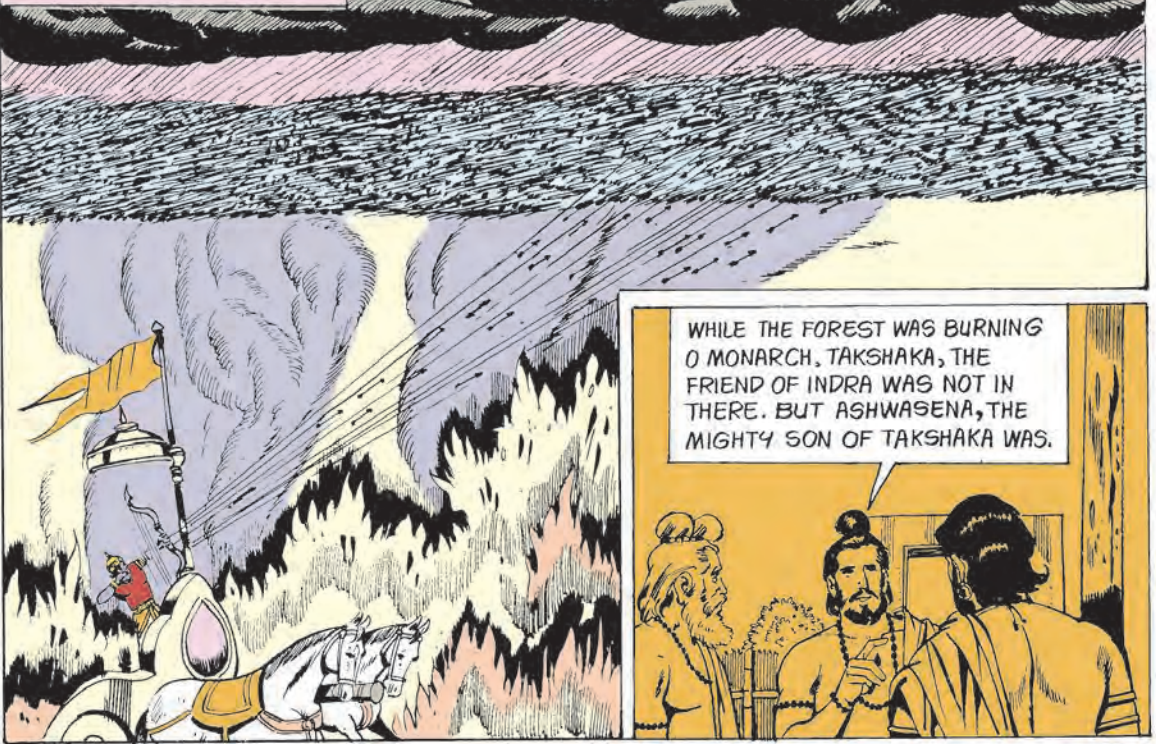
"AN ENRAGED INDRA GATHERED MORE MASSIVE CLOUDS FOR..."



"...A HEAVIER DOWNPOUR. THE ENCOUNTER OF THE RUSHING WATER WITH THE BLAZE FILLED THE FOREST WITH SMOKE AND THE FLASHES OF LIGHTNING TURNED IT TERRIBLE.



"BUT THE COUNTLESS ARROWS RELEASED BY ARJUNA, EVEN AS THEY SET UP A BLOCKADE AGAINST INDRA'S SHOWERS, CLOSED THE PATHS OF ESCAPE FOR THE LIVING CREATURES BELOW.



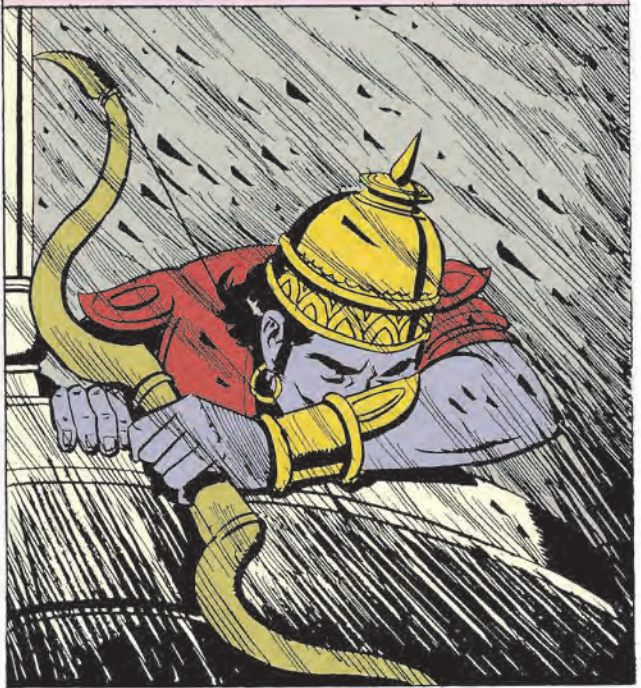
WHILE THE FOREST WAS BURNING O MONARCH, TAKSHAKA, THE FRIEND OF INDRA WAS NOT IN THERE. BUT ASHWASENA, THE MIGHTY SON OF TAKSHAKA WAS.



"AND INDRA, KEEN ON SAVING HIS FRIEND'S SON, RAISED A TERRIBLE STORM...



"... WHICH LAID ARJUNA UNCONSCIOUS FOR A MOMENT. JUST AT THAT MOMENT ASHWASENA ESCAPED.

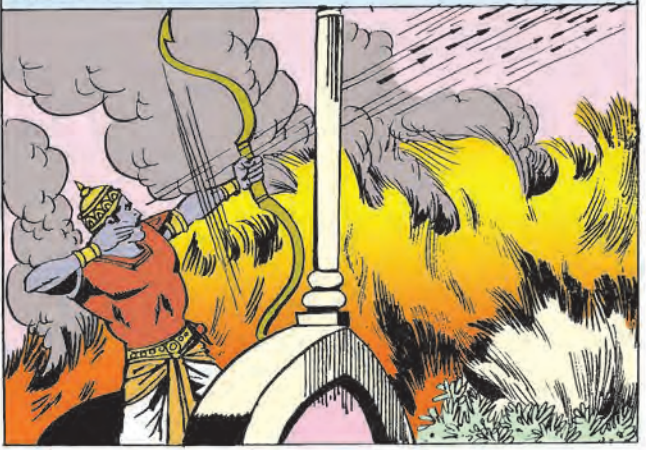


"WHEN ARJUNA REALIZED HOW POTENT THE ILLUSION HAD BEEN, HE CURSED THE SLY SNAKE AS DID KRISHNA AND AGNI, SAYING:

NONE SHALL SPEAK WELL OF YOU.



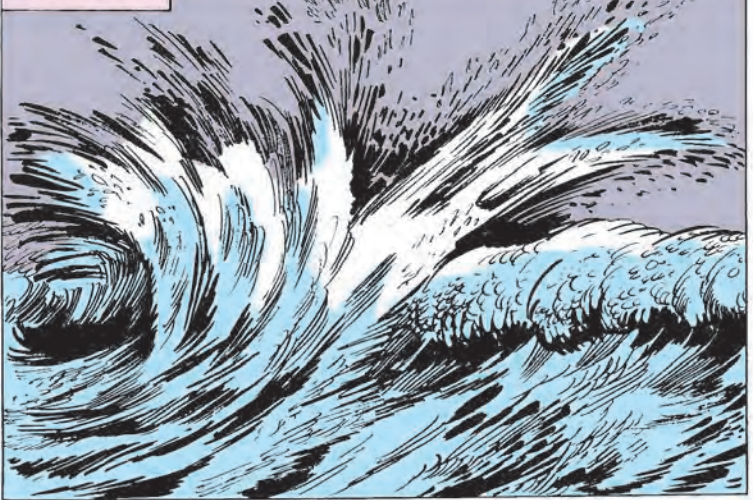
"AND ARJUNA, PIQUED BY THE THOUGHT THAT HE HAD BEEN TRICKED, COVERED THE SKIES WITH ARROWS AND CARRIED THE FIGHT STRAIGHT TO INDRA."



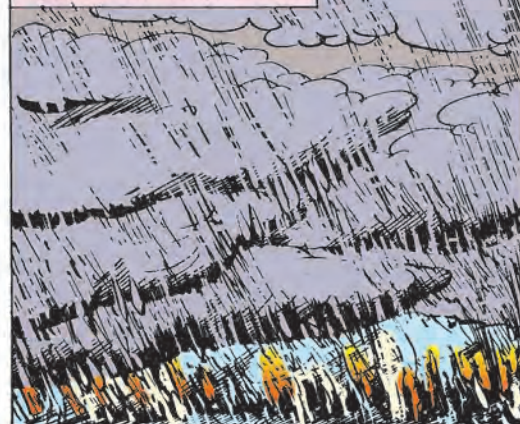
AND INDRA, O MONARCH, SAW THE DETERMINATION OF ARJUNA AND HURLED HIS FIERCE WEAPONS, COVERING THE VERY FIRMAMENT COMPLETELY.



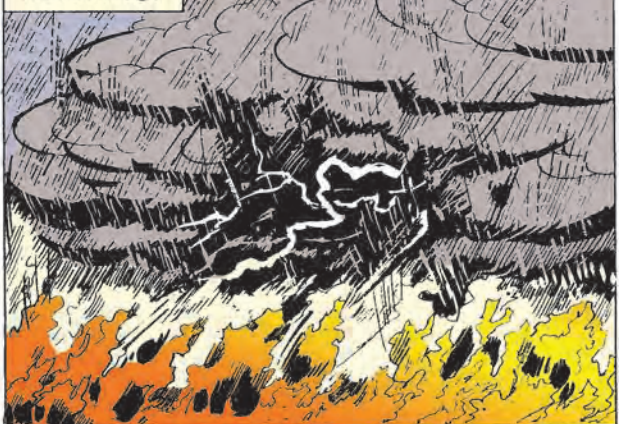
"THEN THERE AROSE HOWLING GALES THAT STIRRED UP THE OCEANS..."



"... AND CREATED BILLOWING CLOUDS RICH WITH MOISTURE.



"AND THOSE CLOUDS EMITTED THUNDER AND LIGHTNING.



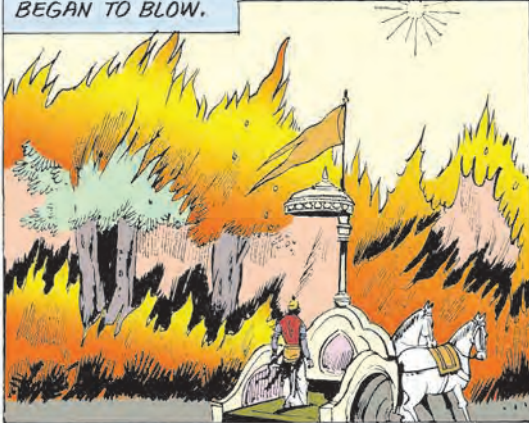
"THEN ARJUNA RELEASED THE VAYAVYA MISSILE, INVESTING IT WITH THE POWER OF MANTRAS..."



"... TO SCATTER THOSE CLOUDS."



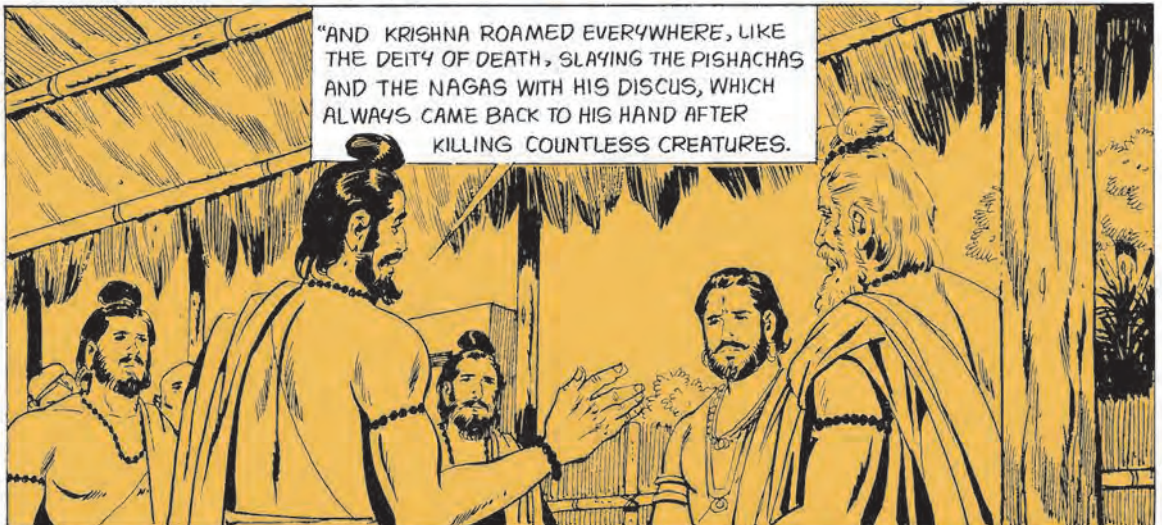
"AND IN A MOMENT THE SKY WAS CLEARED OF CLOUDS AND DARKNESS, THE SUN SHONE AS APPOINTED AND A COOL, DELIGHTFUL BREEZE BEGAN TO BLOW."



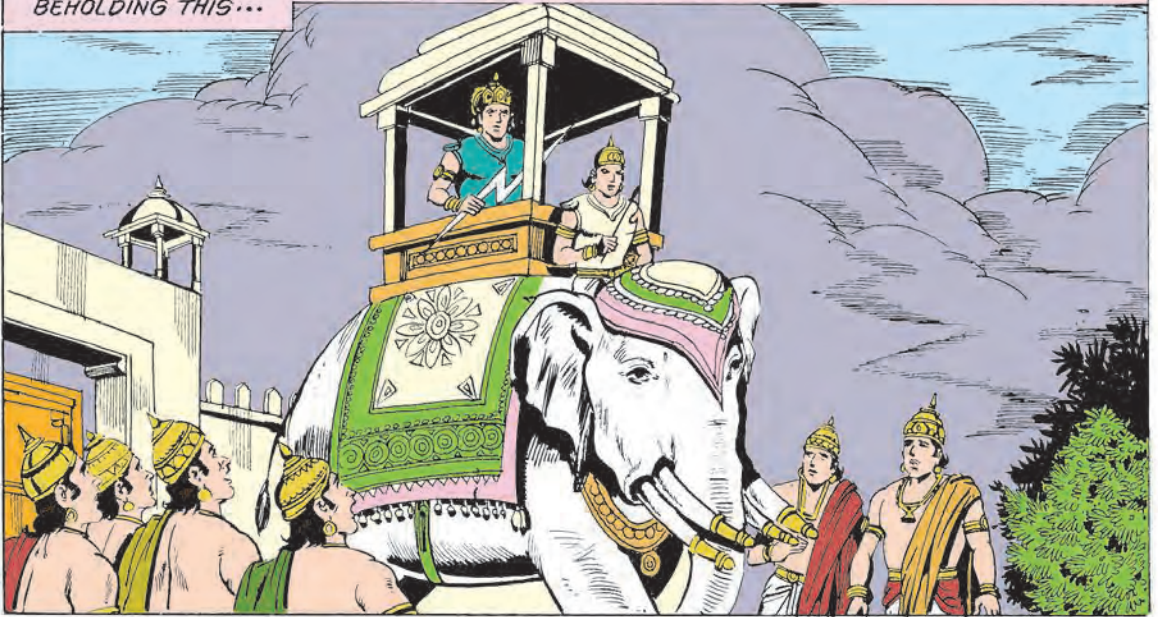
"AND AGNI, WITHOUT ANY OBSTACLES IN HIS PATH, JOYFULLY BLAZED FORTH IN FLAMES OF DIVERSE SHAPES, PERMEATING THE EARTH WITH A RAGING ROAR."



"AND KRISHNA ROAMED EVERYWHERE, LIKE THE DEITY OF DEATH, SLAYING THE PISHACHAS AND THE NAGAS WITH HIS DISCUS, WHICH ALWAYS CAME BACK TO HIS HAND AFTER KILLING COUNTLESS CREATURES."



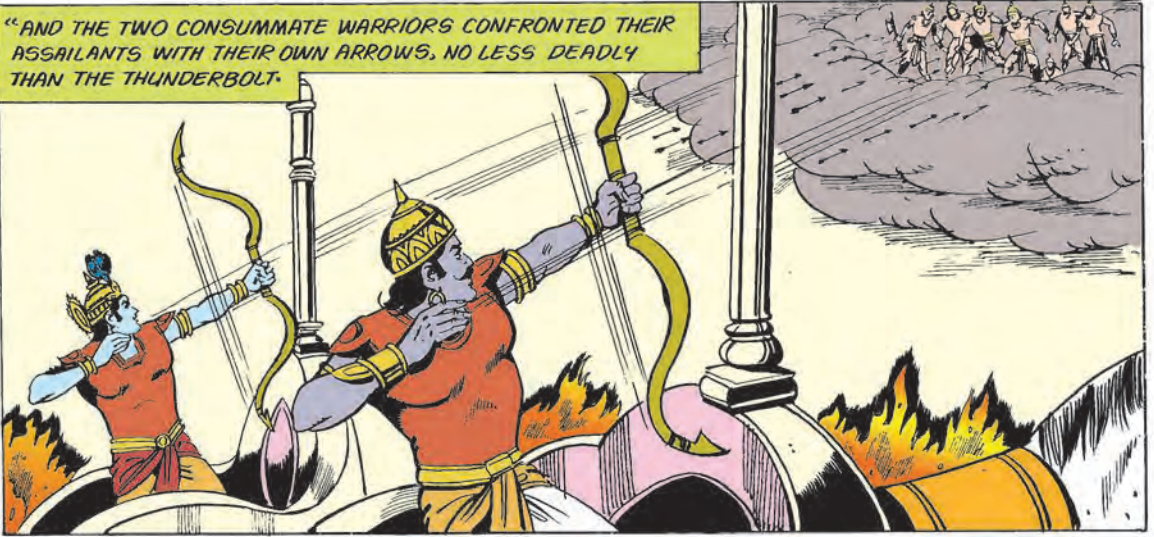
" THEN INDRA, RIDING HIS ELEPHANT, TOOK UP HIS UNERRING WEAPON — THE THUNDERBOLT. BEHOLDING THIS...



"... YAMA WITH HIS DEADLY STAFF, KUBERA HIS MACE, VARUNA HIS NOOSE, SKANDA HIS LONG LANCE, TWASHTA HIS MOUNTAIN, SURYA HIS BRIGHT DART AND MRITYU HIS BATTLE-AXE CHARGED, ALONG WITH OTHER CELESTIALS, AT ARJUNA AND KRISHNA TO SLAY THEM.



"AND THE TWO CONSUMMATE WARRIORS CONFRONTED THEIR ASSAILANTS WITH THEIR OWN ARROWS, NO LESS DEADLY THAN THE THUNDERBOLT."

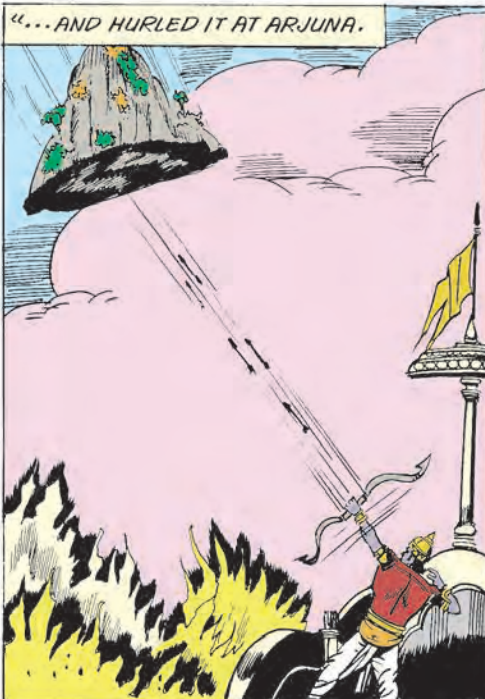
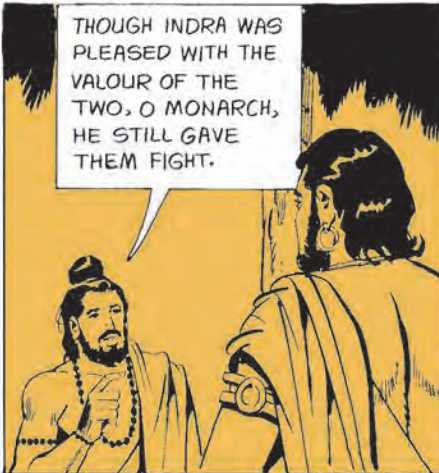


"THE CELESTIALS WERE THWARTED TIME AND AGAIN TILL THEY RETREATED IN FEAR..."



"... AND SOUGHT SAFETY WITH INDRA."





O MONARCH, THE FRAGMENTS OF THAT MOUNTAIN AS THEY CAME PLUNGING DOWN WERE LIKE THE SUN AND THE MOON AND THE PLANETS FALLING DOWN FROM THEIR ORBITS.

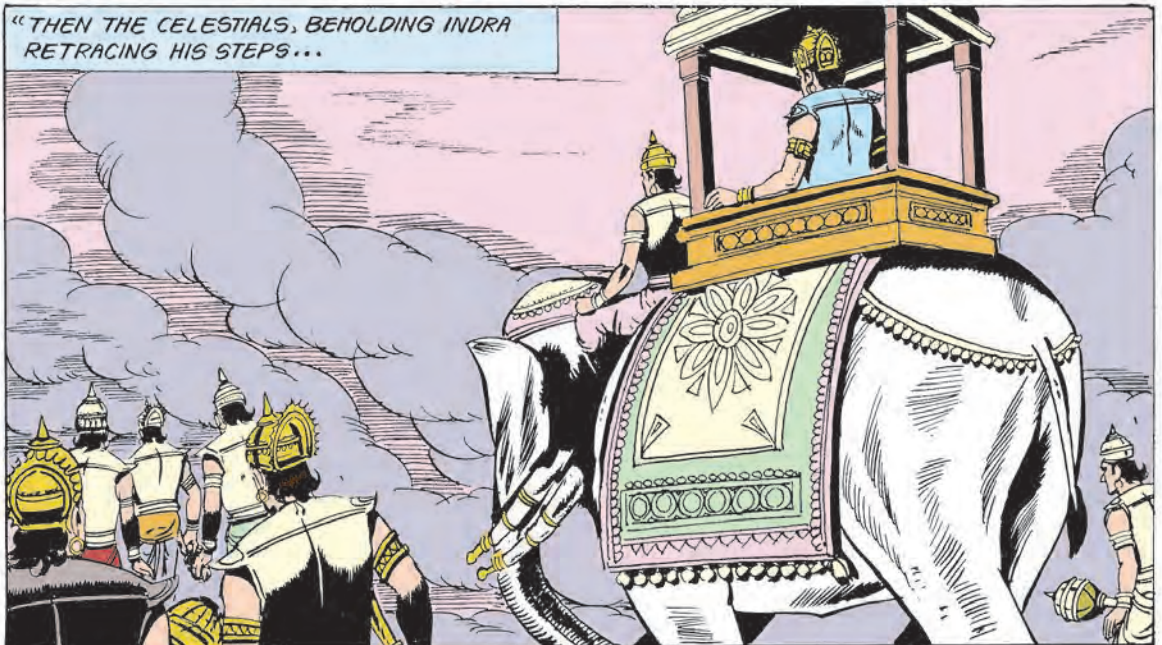


"THEN A VOICE, DEEP AND GRAVE, ADDRESSED ITSELF TO INDRA AND SAID:

YOUR FRIEND TAKSHAKA IS NOT IN THERE. KHANDAVA IS FATED TO BE BURNT. KNOW KRISHNA AND ARJUNA TO BE INVINCIBLE IN BATTLE. THEREFORE IT IS PROPER THAT YOU TURN BACK WITH RETINUE.



"THEN THE CELESTIALS, BEHOLDING INDRA RETRACING HIS STEPS...



"... FOLLOWED HIM WITH THEIR SOLDIERS, TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF THE TRIUMPHANT LEONINE ROAR OF KRISHNA AND ARJUNA.



"IT WAS THEN THAT KRISHNA PERCEIVED AN ASURA, MAYA BY NAME, MAKING HIS ESCAPE FROM TAKSHAKA'S ABODE. AGNI IN HIS CORPOREAL FORM, FOLLOWED INTENT ON CONSUMING THE ASURA.



"KRISHNA STOOD READY WITH HIS DISCUS TO SLAY HIM. SEEING THE RAISED DISCUS...



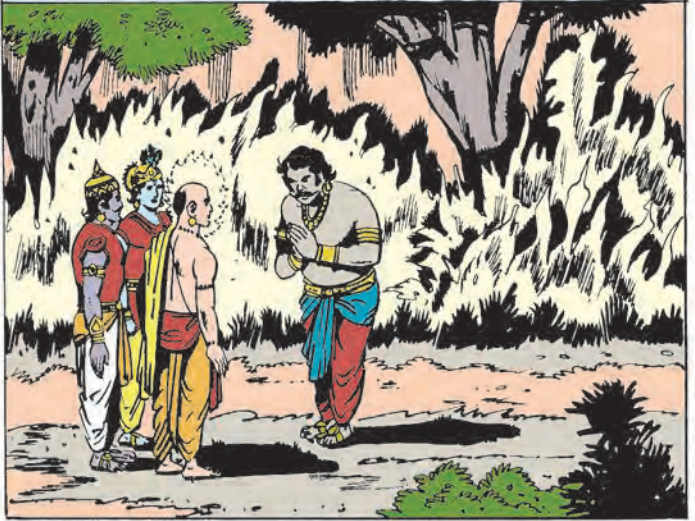
"... AND THE PURSUING AGNI, MAYA SAID:



"ARJUNA HEARD HIS FRIGHTENED VOICE AND SAID:



"AND MAYA WAS NOT HARMED BY KRISHNA OR DEVoured BY AGNI BECAUSE HE WAS GRANTED ASYLUM BY ARJUNA.



AND, O MONARCH, AGNI CONSUMED THE KHANDAVA FOREST FOR A WHOLE FORTNIGHT FREE FROM THE FEAR OF INDRA AND SECURE UNDER THE MIGHT OF ARJUNA AND KRISHNA.



"THEN INDRA DESCENDED TO EARTH WITH ALL HIS RETINUE...



"... AND SAID TO ARJUNA AND KRISHNA :



I AM PLEASED WITH YOU WHO HAVE ACCOMPLISHED A DEED HARD FOR EVEN THE CELESTIALS. ASK FOR A BOON SELDOM GRANTED TO MEN.

"ARJUNA ASKED HIM FOR VARIOUS MARVELLOUS WEAPONS AND INDRA APPOINTED THE TIME FOR GIVING THEM SAYING:

IN TIMES TO COME, WHEN MAHADEVA'S GRACE FALLS ON YOU, THEN SHALL I GIVE YOU ALL MY WEAPONS.



"THEN KRISHNA, O MONARCH, ASKED THAT HIS FRIENDSHIP WITH ARJUNA BE ETERNAL. INDRA GRANTED HIM THAT BOON AND THEN, AFTER SPEAKING TO AGNI, RETURNED TO HIS HEAVENLY ABODE WITH HIS COMPANIONS.

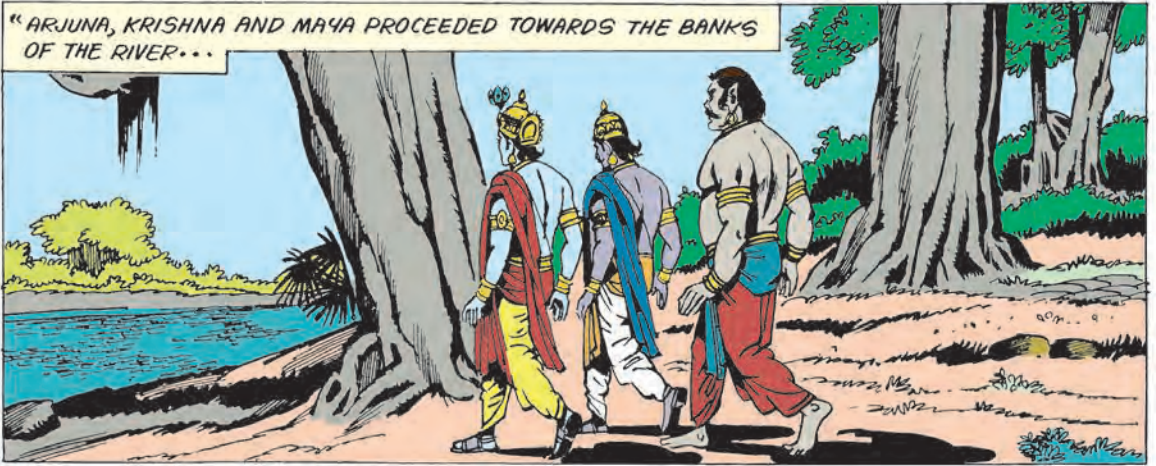


"AND AGNI SAID TO ARJUNA AND KRISHNA:

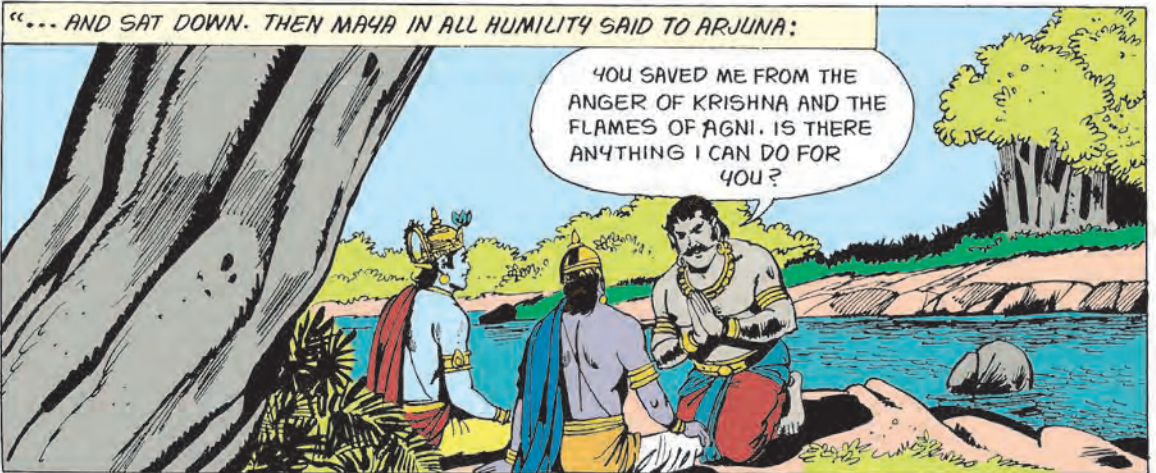
I HAVE BEEN SERVED WELL BY BOTH OF YOU. NOW YOU MAY GO WHEREVER YOU CHOOSE TO.



"ARJUNA, KRISHNA AND MAYA PROCEEDED TOWARDS THE BANKS OF THE RIVER..."



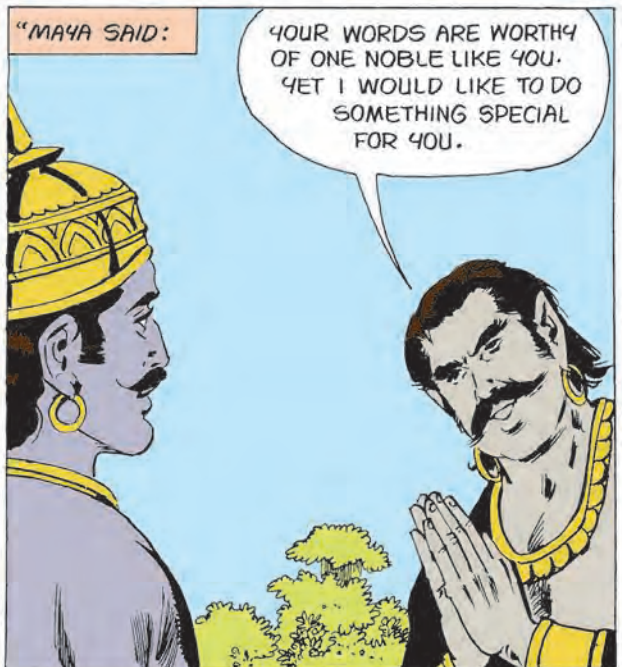
"... AND SAT DOWN. THEN MAYA IN ALL HUMILITY SAID TO ARJUNA:

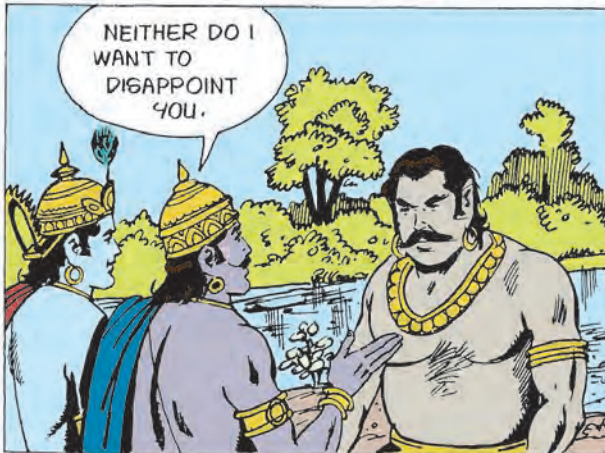
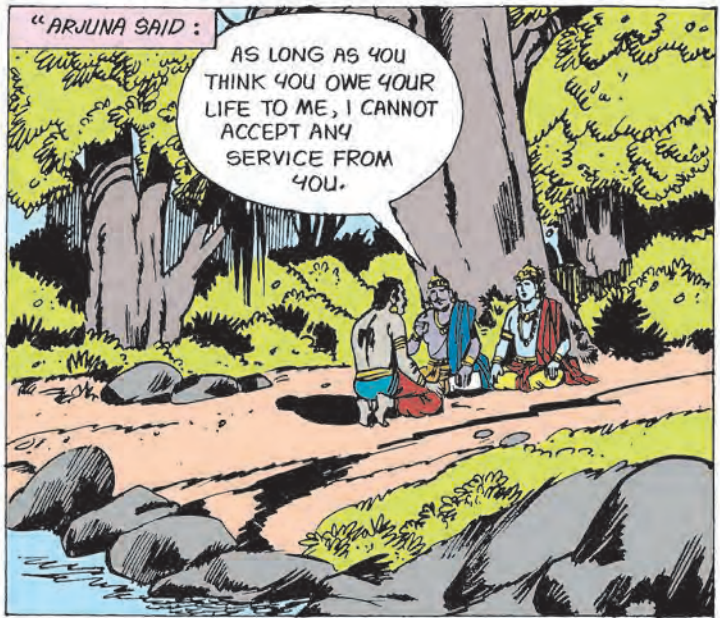
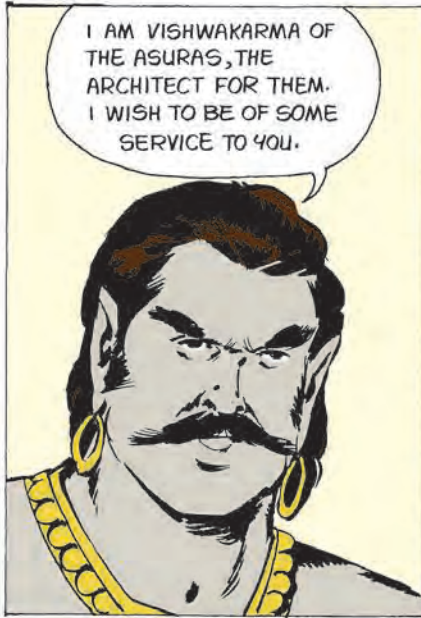


"ARJUNA REPLIED:

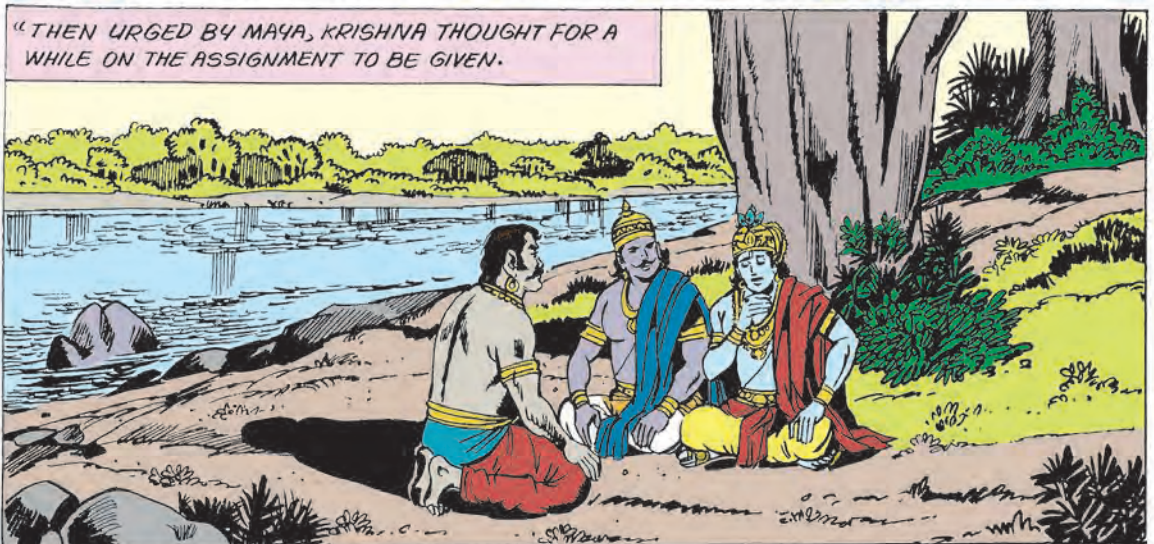


"MAYA SAID:





"THEN URGED BY MAYA, KRISHNA THOUGHT FOR A WHILE ON THE ASSIGNMENT TO BE GIVEN.



"AND THEN HE SAID:

KEEN AS YOU
SEEM TO BE, YOU MAY
BUILD A HALL FOR
YUDHISHTHIRA.



MAKE IT A
MANSION MEN
WILL MARVEL AT.
MAKE IT
UNIQUE.



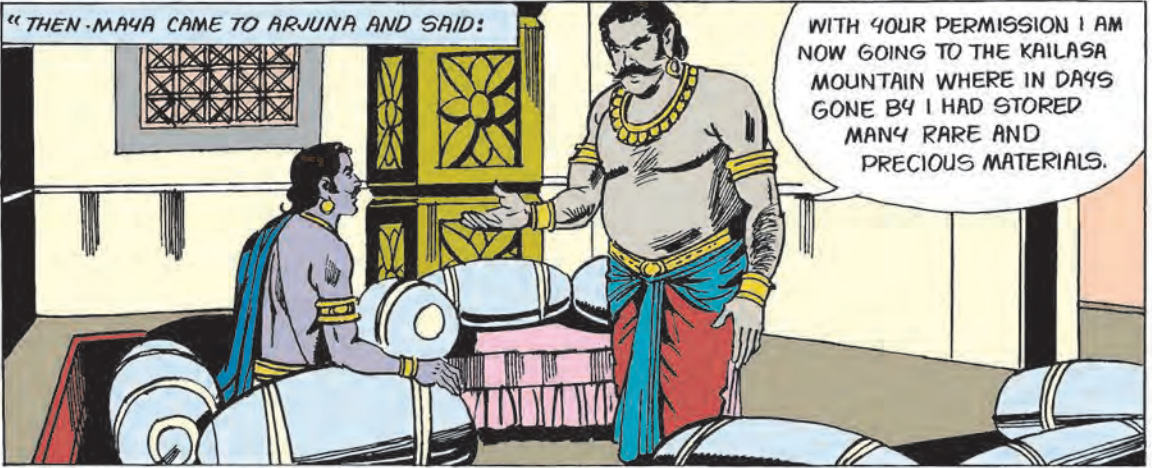
LET THE
BEST DESIGNS
KNOWN TO THE
DEVAS, ASURAS AND
MANKIND BE SEEN
IN IT.

THEN KRISHNA AND ARJUNA
NARRATED EVERYTHING TO
YUDHISHTHIRA AND LED MAYA
TO HIM. AND MAYA WAS
RECEIVED BY HIM WITH ALL
THE HONOURS DUE.

KRISHNA STAYED WITH THE
PANDAVAS IN KHANDAVAPRASTHA
FOR SOME TIME AND THEN
TOOK LEAVE OF THEM TO GO
AND VISIT HIS FATHER.

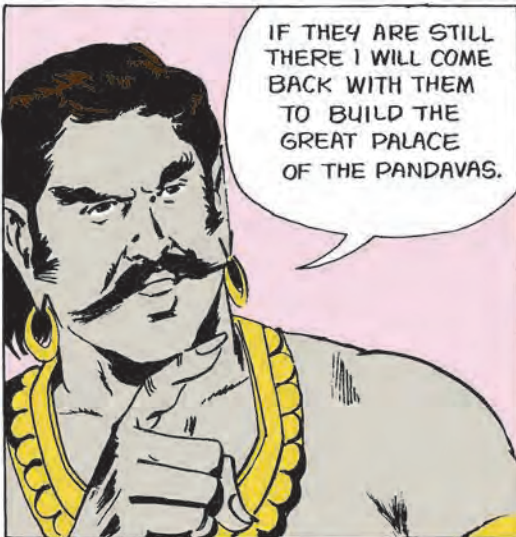


"THEN MAYA CAME TO ARJUNA AND SAID:



WITH YOUR PERMISSION I AM NOW GOING TO THE KAILASA MOUNTAIN WHERE IN DAYS GONE BY I HAD STORED MANY RARE AND PRECIOUS MATERIALS.

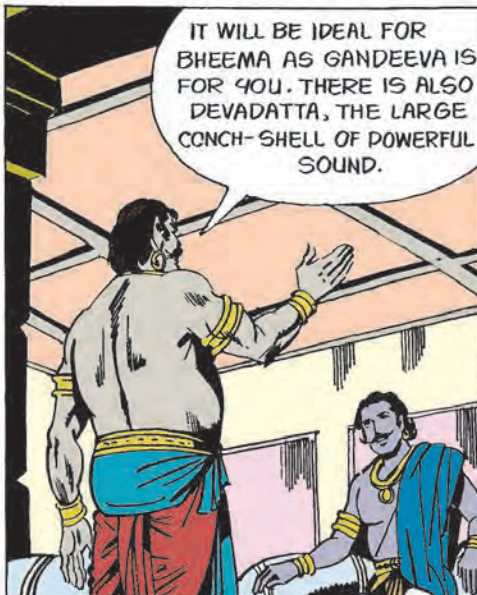
IF THEY ARE STILL THERE I WILL COME BACK WITH THEM TO BUILD THE GREAT PALACE OF THE PANDAVAS.



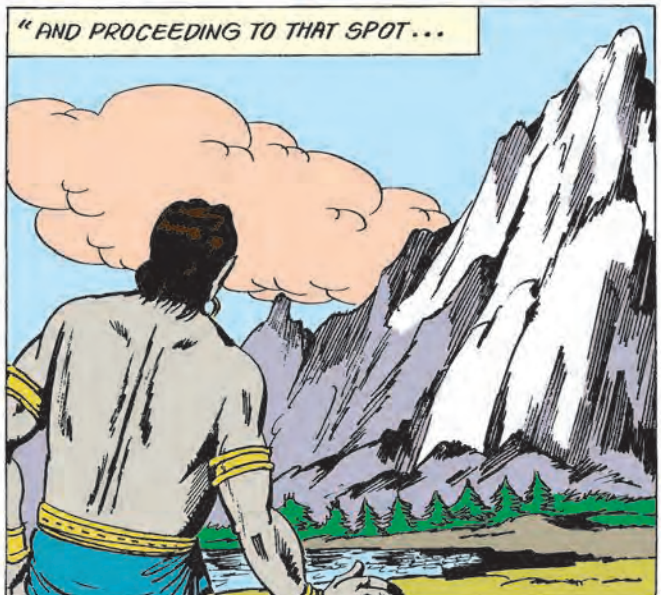
IN THE LAKE THERE, THERE IS ALSO A FIERCE MACE, ENCRUSTED WITH GOLD KNOBS AND POSSESSING THE STRENGTH OF A HUNDRED THOUSAND ORDINARY MACES.



IT WILL BE IDEAL FOR BHEEMA AS GANDEEVA IS FOR YOU. THERE IS ALSO DEVADATTA, THE LARGE CONCH-SHELL OF POWERFUL SOUND.

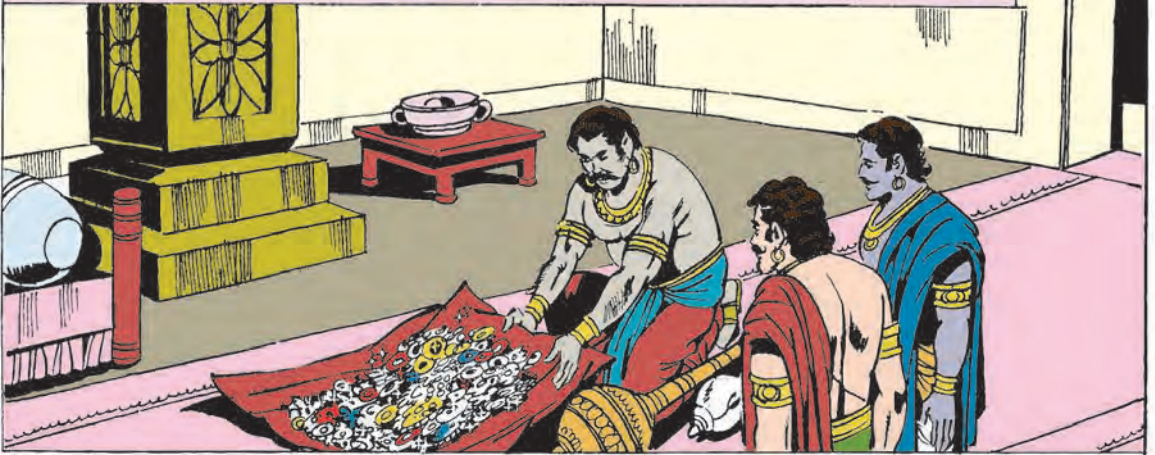


"AND PROCEEDING TO THAT SPOT..."





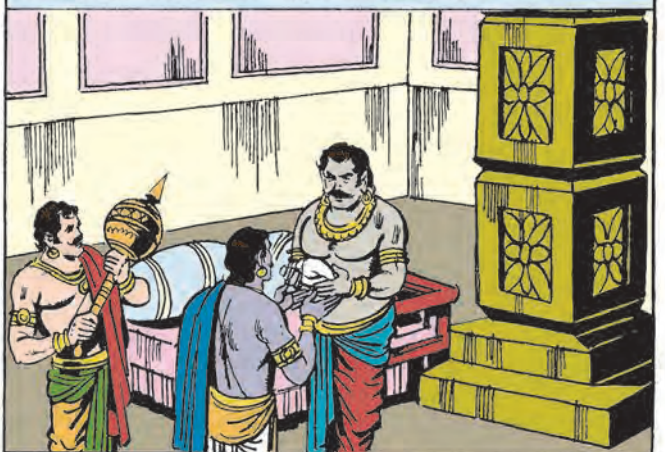
"... MAYA RETURNED WITH THE MACE, THE CONCH-SHELL AND THE PRECIOUS MATERIALS.



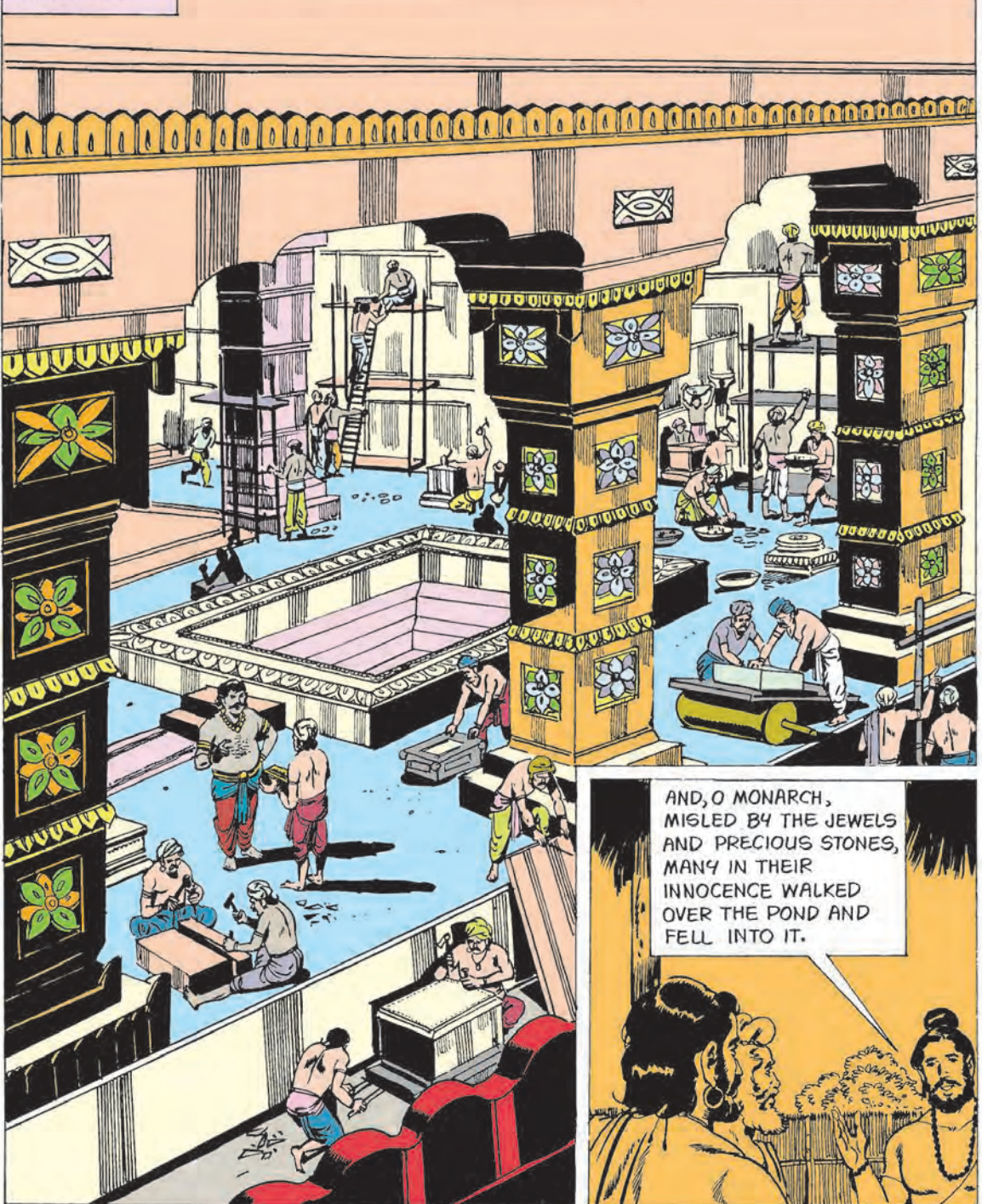
"HE GAVE THAT PRICELESS MACE TO
BHEEMA..."



"... AND TO ARJUNA THE CONCH-SHELL, THE SOUND OF
WHICH WOULD SEND SHIVERS DOWN THE WORLD.



"AND THEN HE STARTED BUILDING THE INIMITABLE PALACE WITH COLUMNS OF GOLD AND WALLS ENCRUSTED WITH PRECIOUS STONES AND WHICH OCCUPIED AN AREA OF FIVE THOUSAND SQUARE CUBITS.* WITHIN THE PALACE GROUNDS MAYA DESIGNED A POND, THE BANKS OF WHICH WERE SET IN MARBLE SLABS DECORATED WITH PEARLS. A FLIGHT OF CRYSTAL STEPS LED ONE FROM THE BANKS TO THE WATER WHICH WAS TRANSPARENTLY CLEAR. HE PLACED IN THE WATER, LOTUSES MADE OF DARK HUGE GEMS WITH STALKS OF BRIGHT JEWELS; AND FISH AND WATER-BIRDS AND TORTOISES.



AND, O MONARCH, MISLED BY THE JEWELS AND PRECIOUS STONES, MANY IN THEIR INNOCENCE WALKED OVER THE POND AND FELL INTO IT.



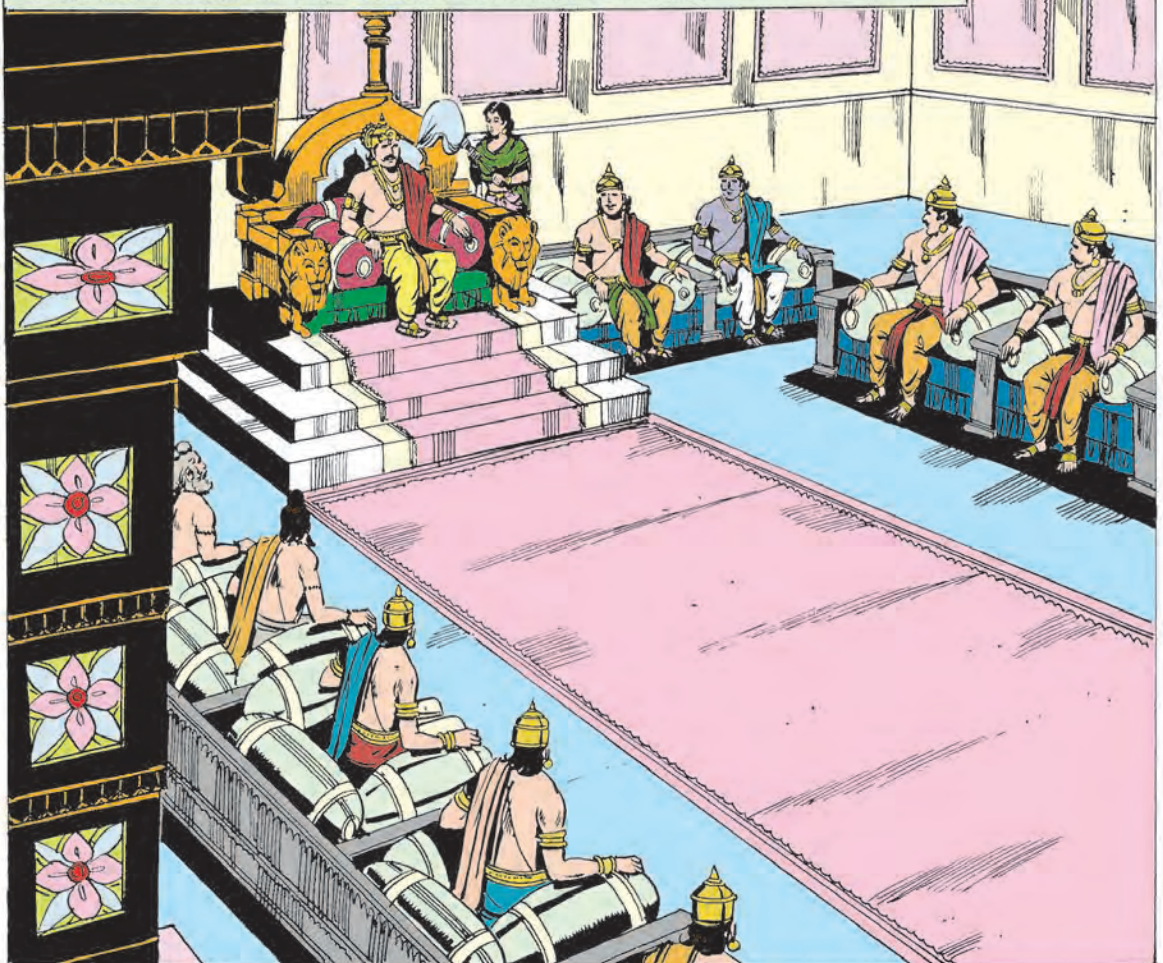
IN MAGNIFICENCE, THE HUGE PALACE WITH ITS BEJEWELLED ARCHWAYS AND PROFUSELY DECORATED WALLS, SURPASSED THE MANSION OF BRAHMA HIMSELF. THERE WERE EIGHT THOUSAND RAKSHASAS CALLED "KINKARAS" TO GUARD AND PRESERVE THE PALACE.

MAYA COMPLETED THIS WORK IN FOURTEEN MONTHS AND INFORMED YUDHISHTHIRA OF IT.

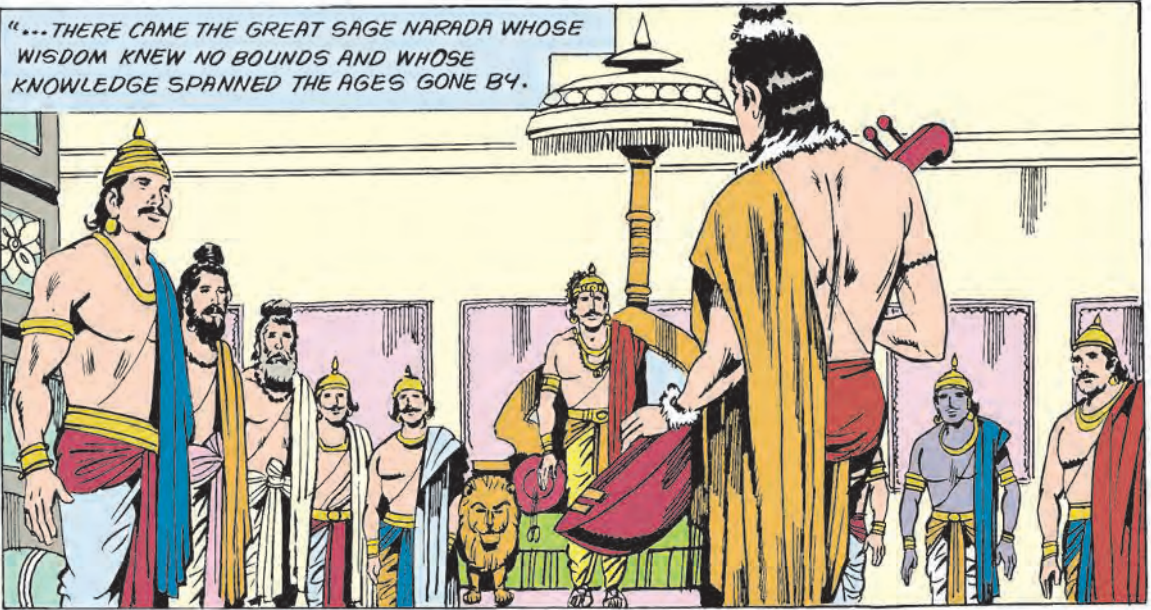
THEN DID YUDHISHTHIRA MAKE HIS CEREMONIAL ENTRY AND ALONG WITH HIS BROTHERS LIVE A HAPPY LIFE LIKE INDRA IN HIS HEAVENLY ABODE.



"THEN ONE DAY WHILE THE PANDAVAS WERE IN ASSEMBLY IN THE PALACE..."



"...THERE CAME THE GREAT SAGE NARADA WHOSE WISDOM KNEW NO BOUNDS AND WHOSE KNOWLEDGE SPANNED THE AGES GONE BY.



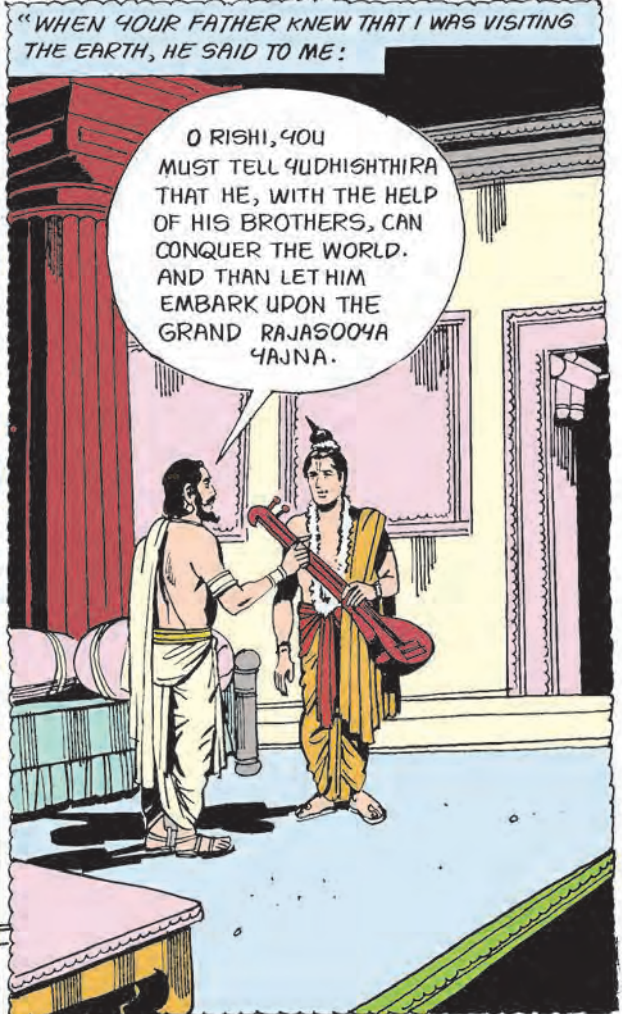
"AND HE SAID TO YUDHISHTHIRA:

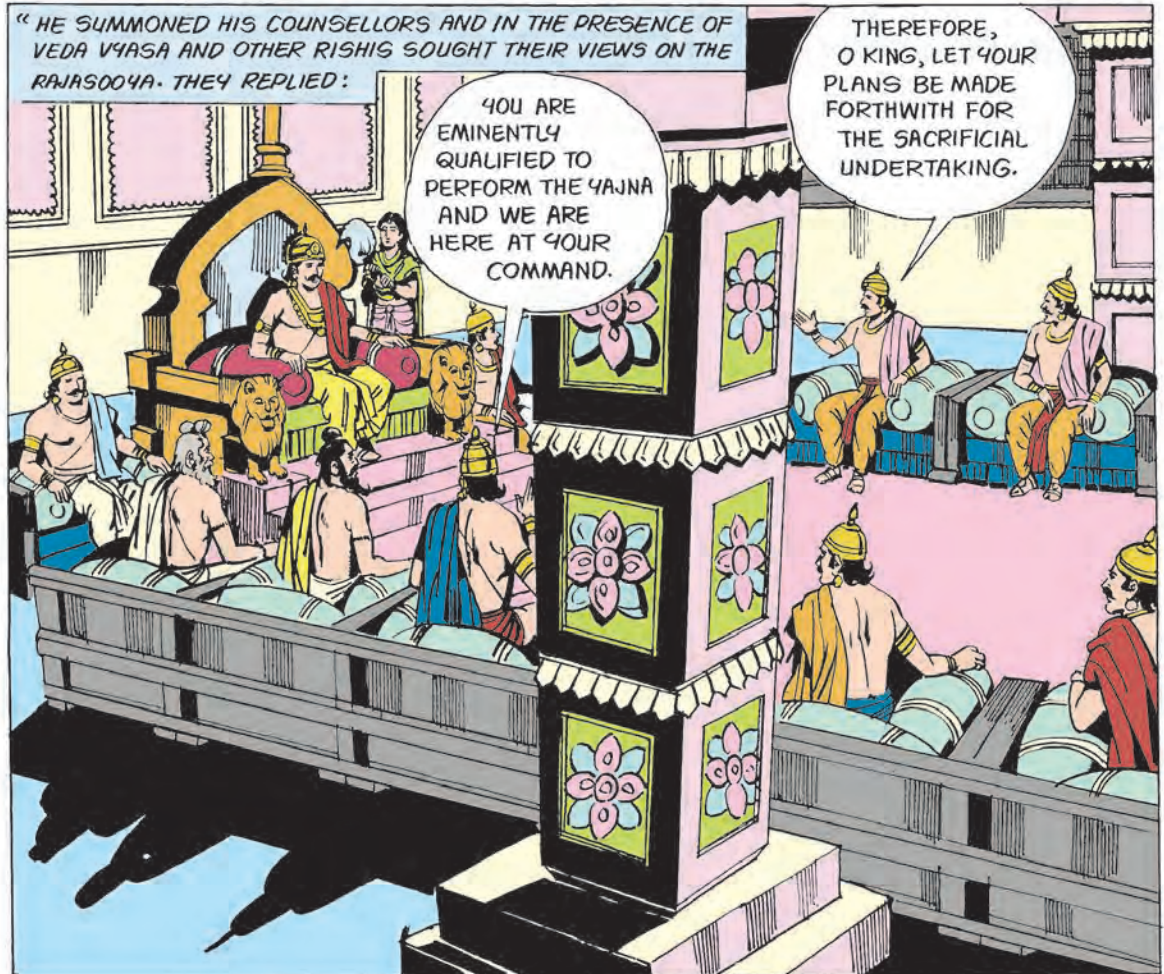
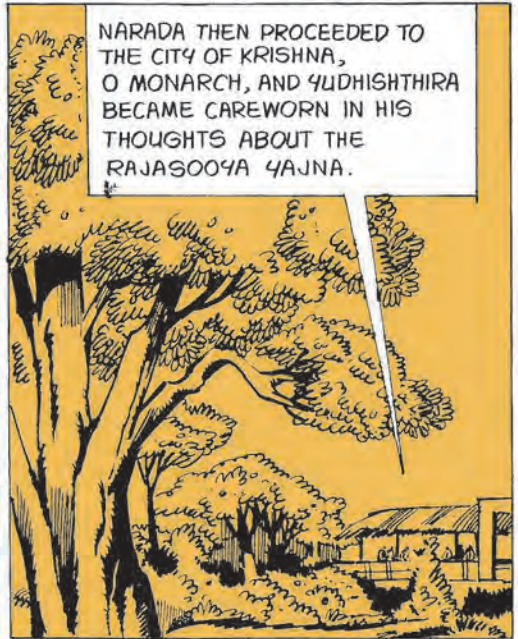
A KING WHO CONSCIENTIOUSLY PRESERVES THE ORDER OF HIERACHY, AND DISCHARGES HIS DUTIES, WILL LEAD A HAPPY LIFE AND WILL ENTER THE DOMAIN OF INDRA THEREAFTER.

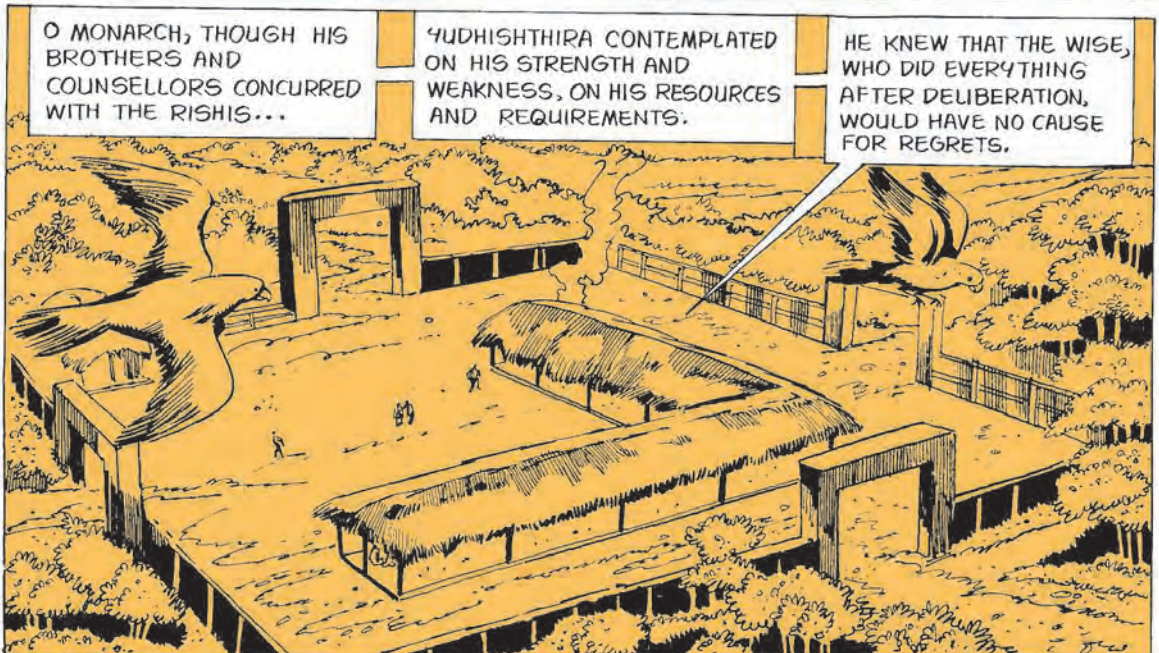
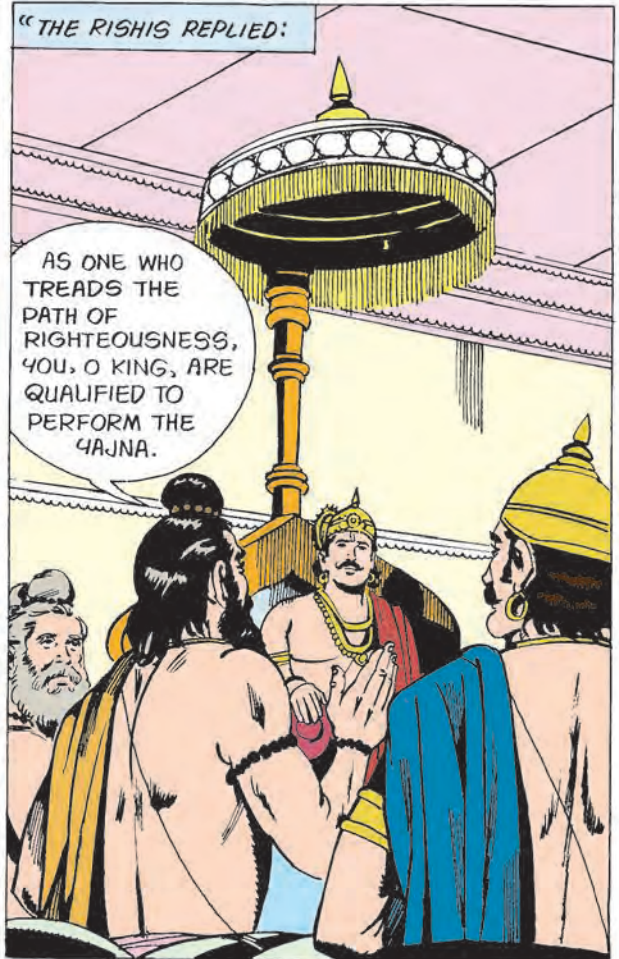
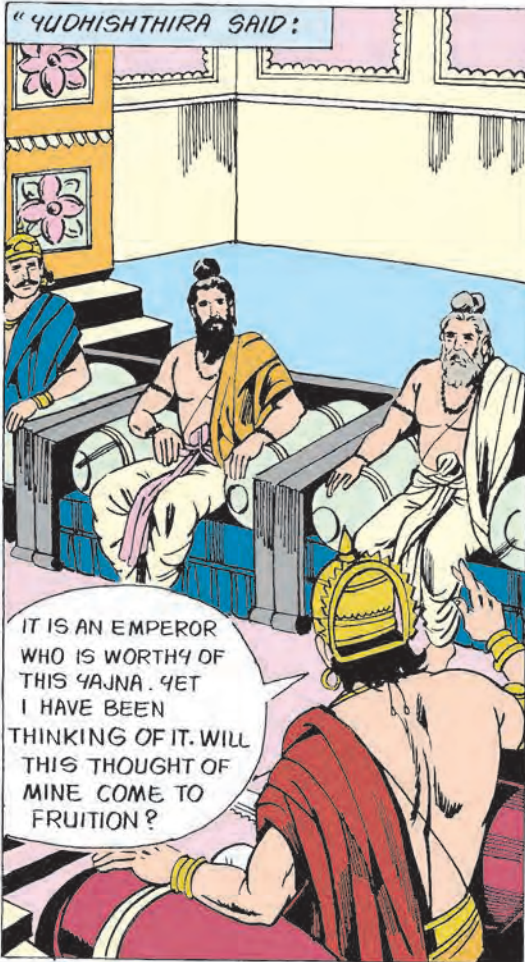


"WHEN YOUR FATHER KNEW THAT I WAS VISITING THE EARTH, HE SAID TO ME:

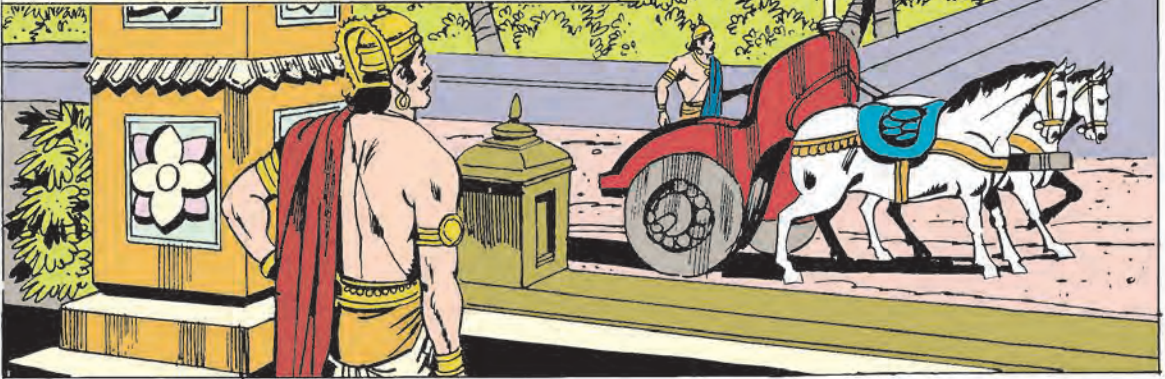
O RISHI, YOU MUST TELL YUDHISHTHIRA THAT HE, WITH THE HELP OF HIS BROTHERS, CAN CONQUER THE WORLD. AND THEN LET HIM EMBARK UPON THE GRAND RAJASOOYA YAJNA.



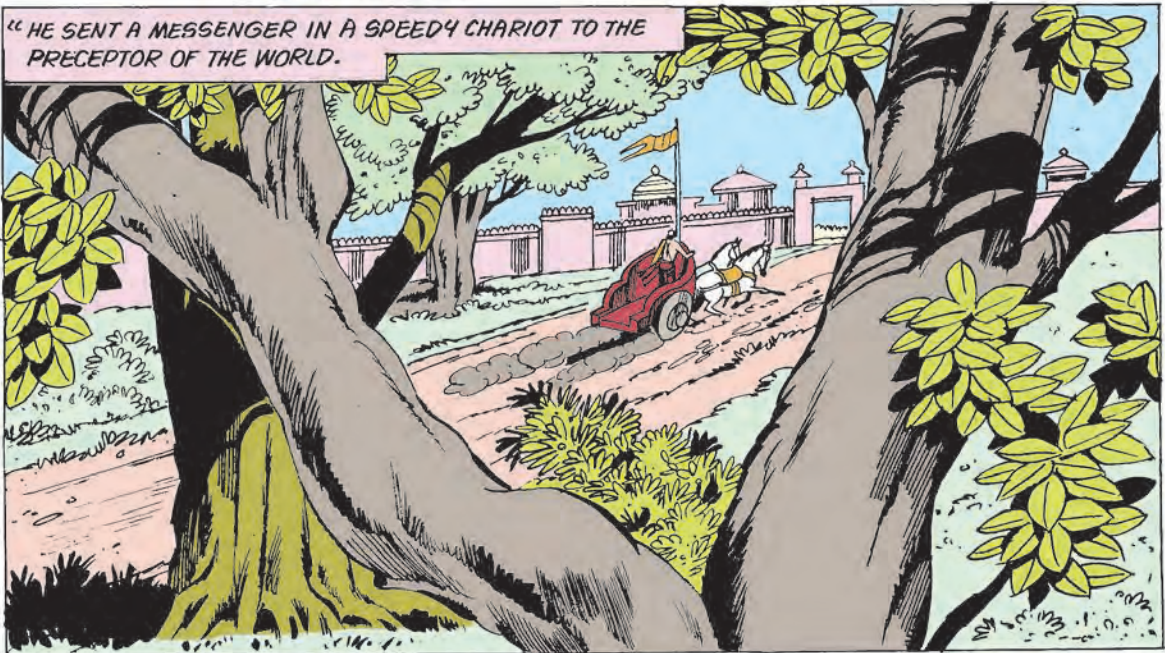




"DECIDING THAT HIS JUDGEMENT WAS INADEQUATE IN THE MATTER, YUDHISHTHIRA THOUGHT OF KRISHNA AS THE WORTHY COUNSELLOR. HE KNEW THAT KRISHNA WAS THE ALL-KNOWING, ALL-ACCOMPLISHING AND ALL-CONTAINING PERSONALITY."

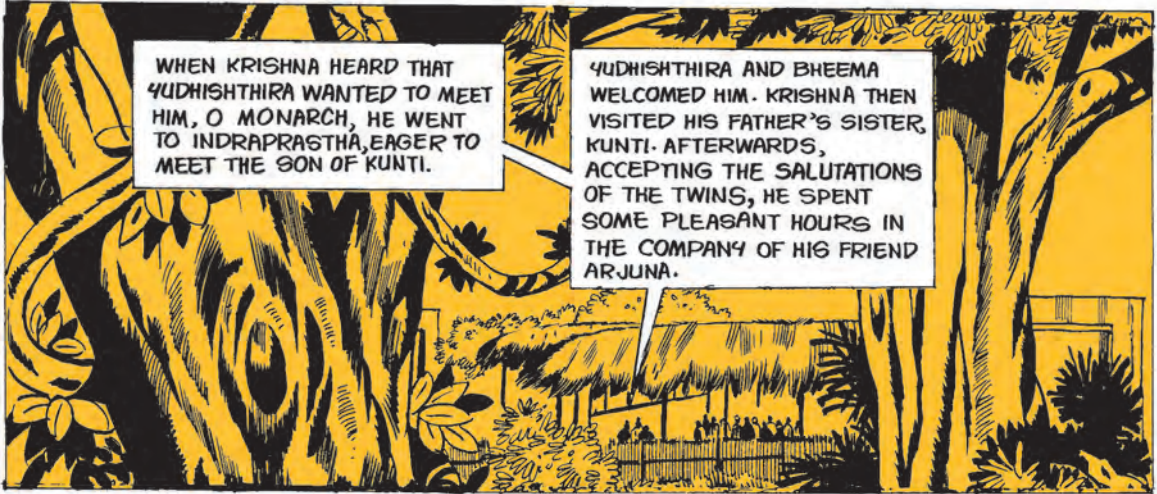


"HE SENT A MESSENGER IN A SPEEDY CHARIOT TO THE PRECEPTOR OF THE WORLD."

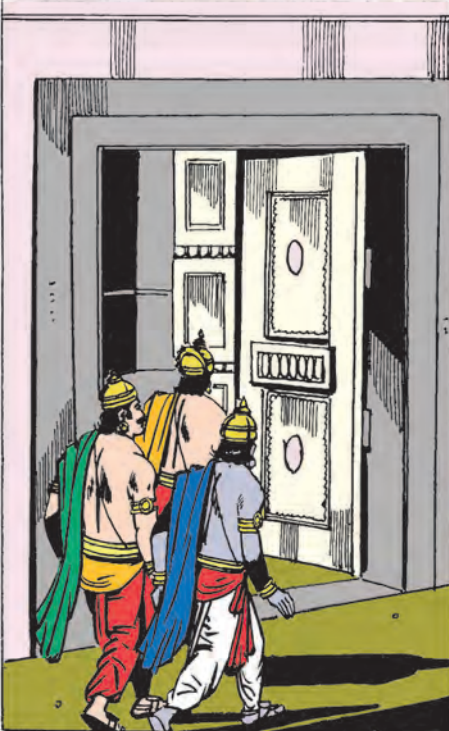


Mahabharata - 16

THE PANDAVAS CONQUER THE WORLD

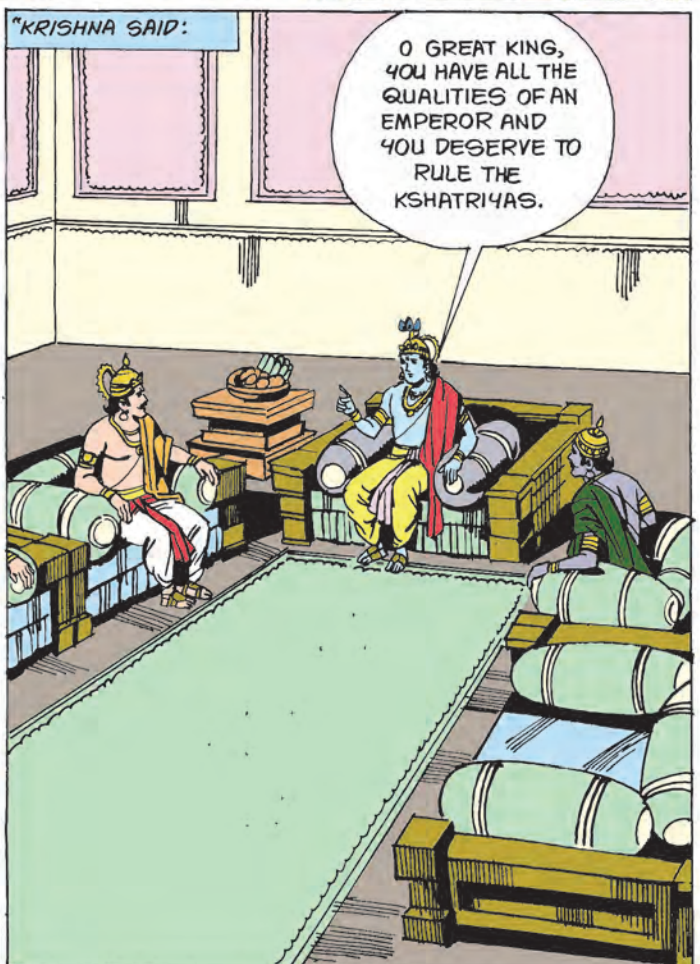
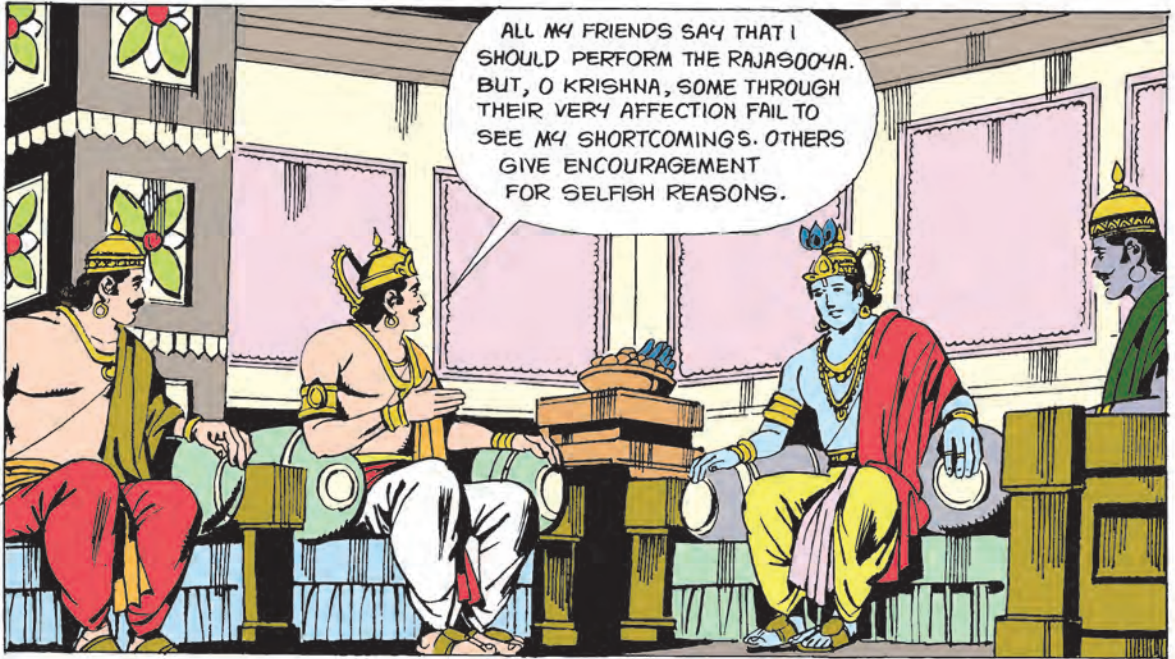


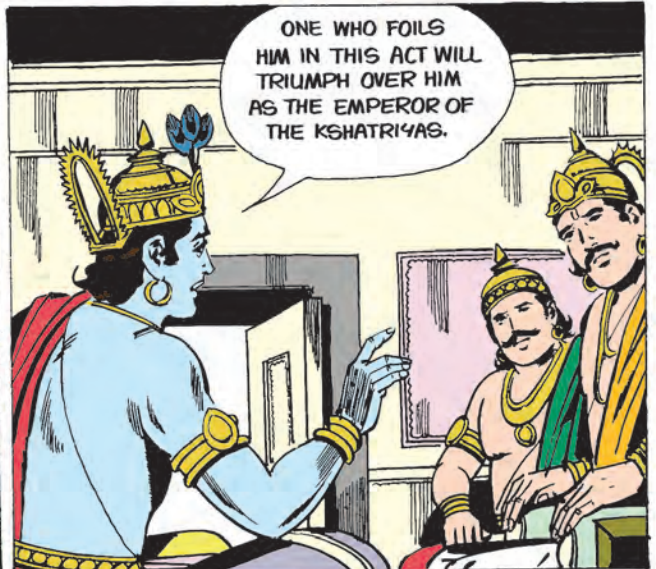
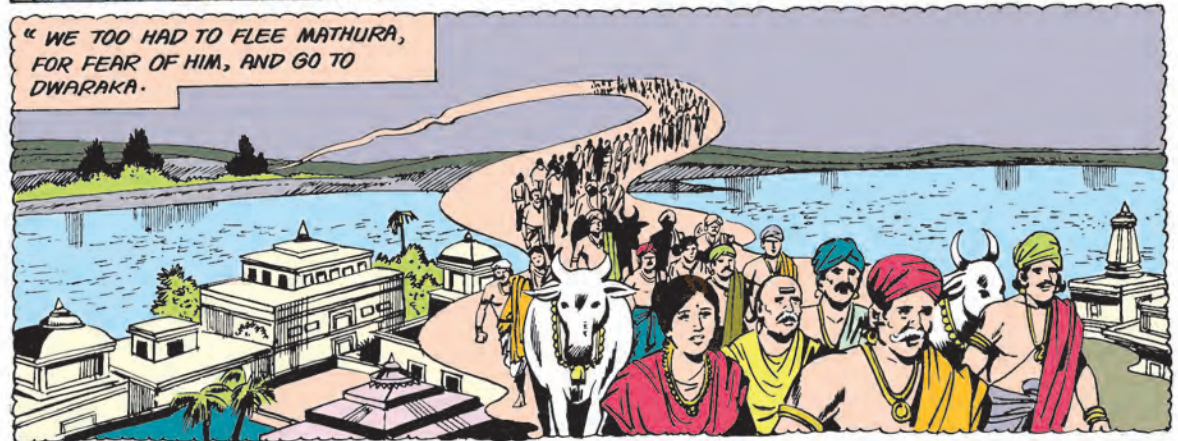
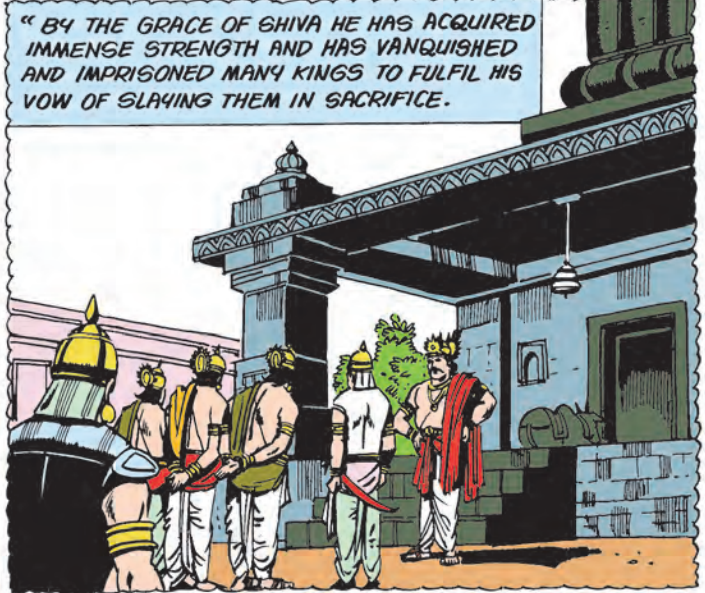
"THEN, AS HE RESTED IN HIS APARTMENT, YUDHISHTHIRA APPROACHED HIM..."

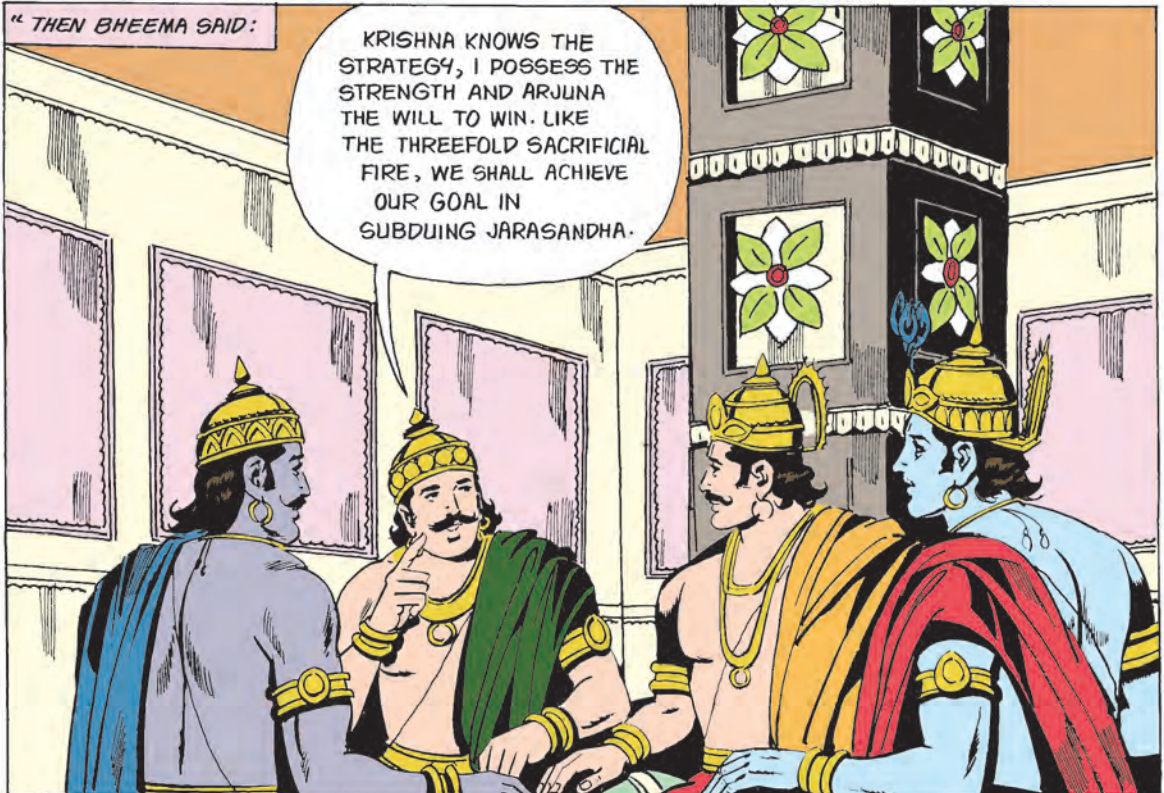


"... AND TOLD HIM OF HIS INTENTIONS. HE SAID :









"UDHISHTHIRA REPLIED:

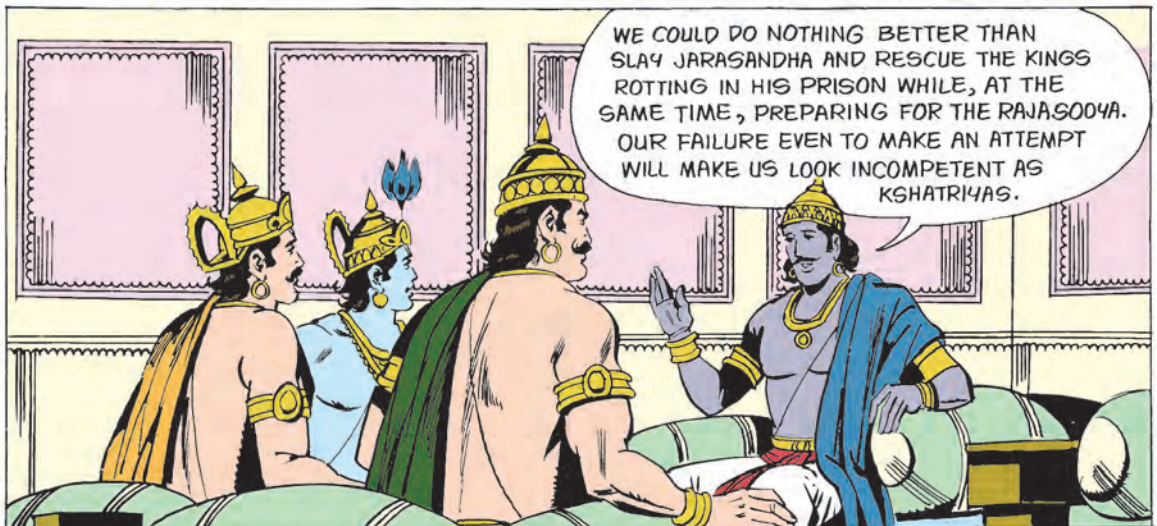
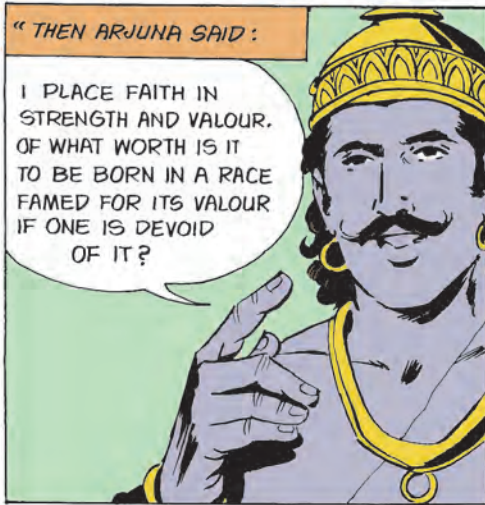
WHEN THE GREAT
YAMA HIMSELF IS NO
MATCH FOR JARASANDHA
AND HIS FEROCIOUS
ARMY, HOW WILL YOU
FARE WITH YOUR
EFFORTS?

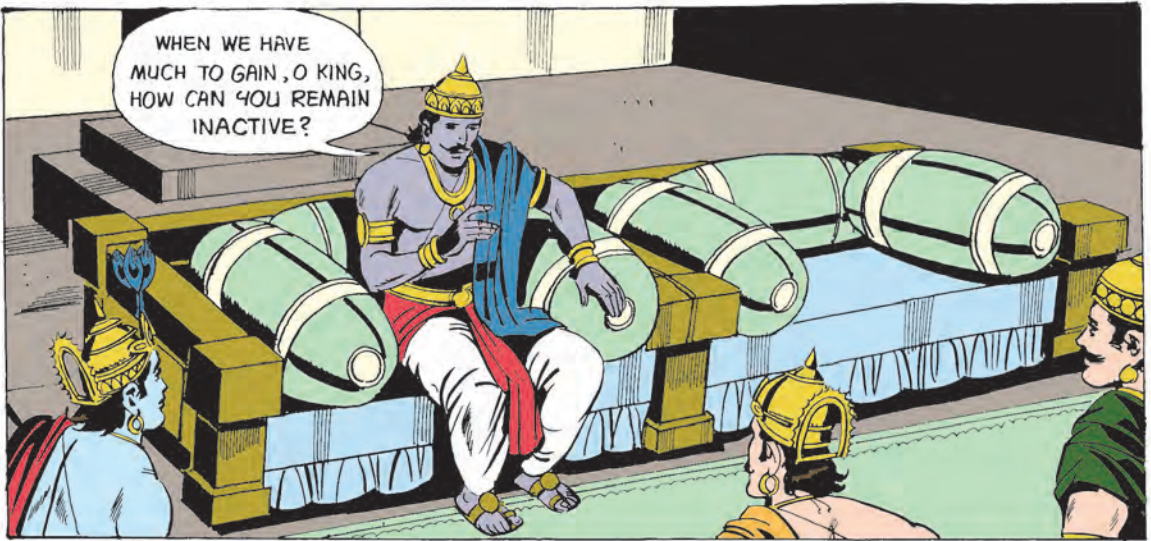
HOW CAN I SEND YOU,
O KRISHNA, TO
JARASANDHA MERELY
BECAUSE I COVET THE
STATUS OF AN EMPEROR?

LIFE WITHOUT YOU THREE IS
MEANINGLESS FOR ME. I
WOULD BE BEREFT OF DHARMA,
ARTHA AND KAMA. IF BHEEMA
AND ARJUNA ARE MY EYES
YOU VERILY ARE MY
MIND.

THE RAJASOOYA YAJNA
APPEARS ILL-OMENED. IT
FOREBODES DISASTER. IT
OPPRESSES MY MIND.

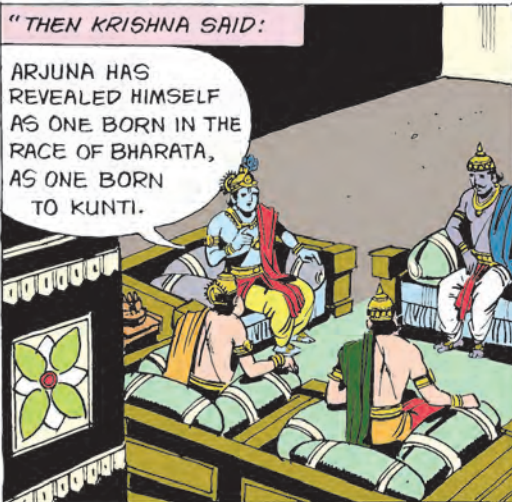
HOW SHALL
I SURVIVE
WITHOUT MY
EYES AND MY
MIND?





"THEN KRISHNA SAID:

ARJUNA HAS REVEALED HIMSELF AS ONE BORN IN THE RACE OF BHARATA, AS ONE BORN TO KUNTI.



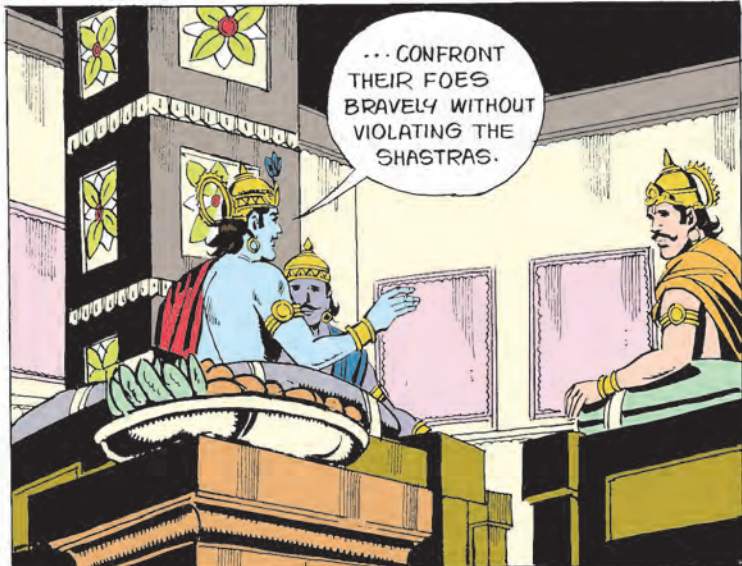
WE KNOW NOT WHEN DEATH WILL CLAIM US. NOR HAVE WE HEARD OF ANYONE ESCAPING DEATH BY AVOIDING STRIFE.

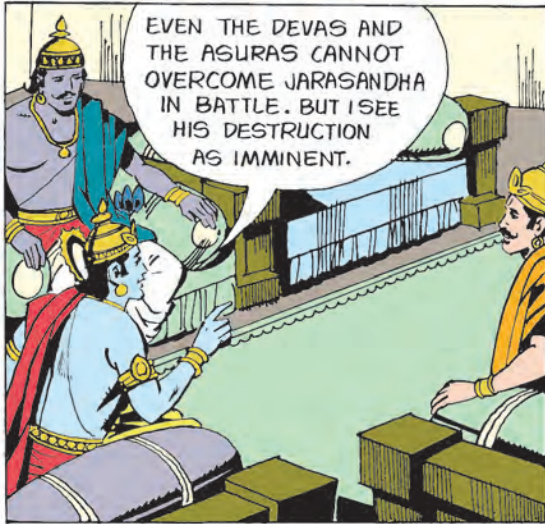
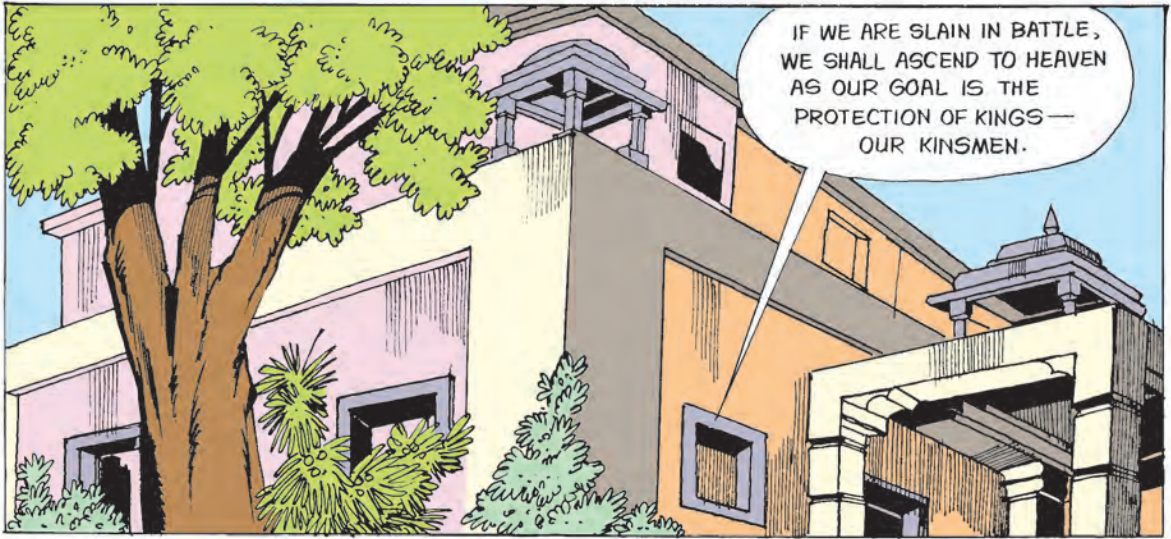


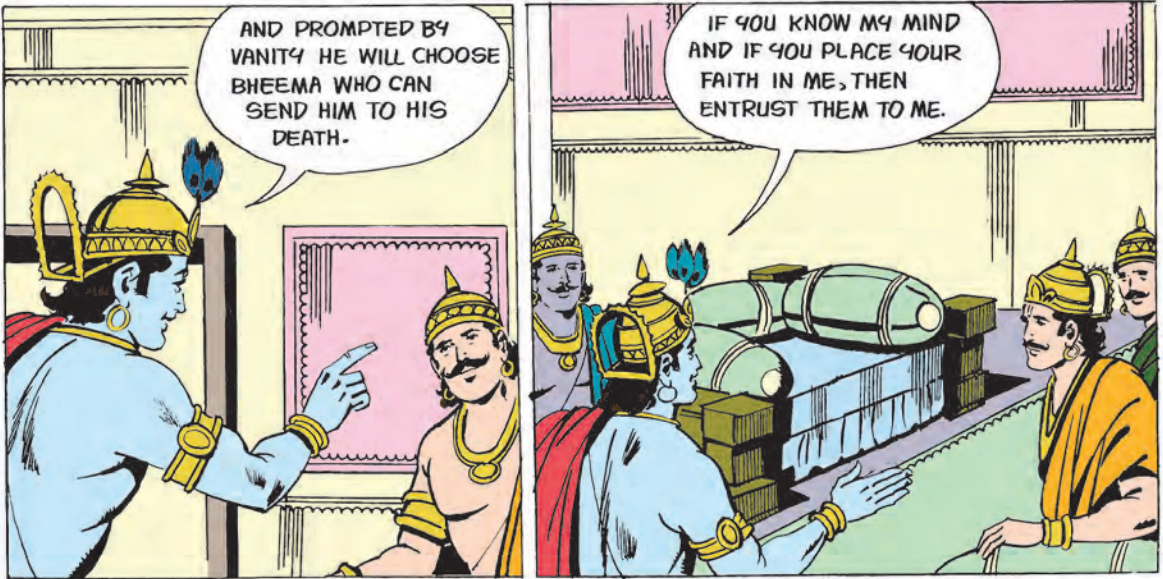
THIS, THEREFORE, IS WHAT MEN OUGHT TO DO FOR THEIR OWN SATISFACTION...



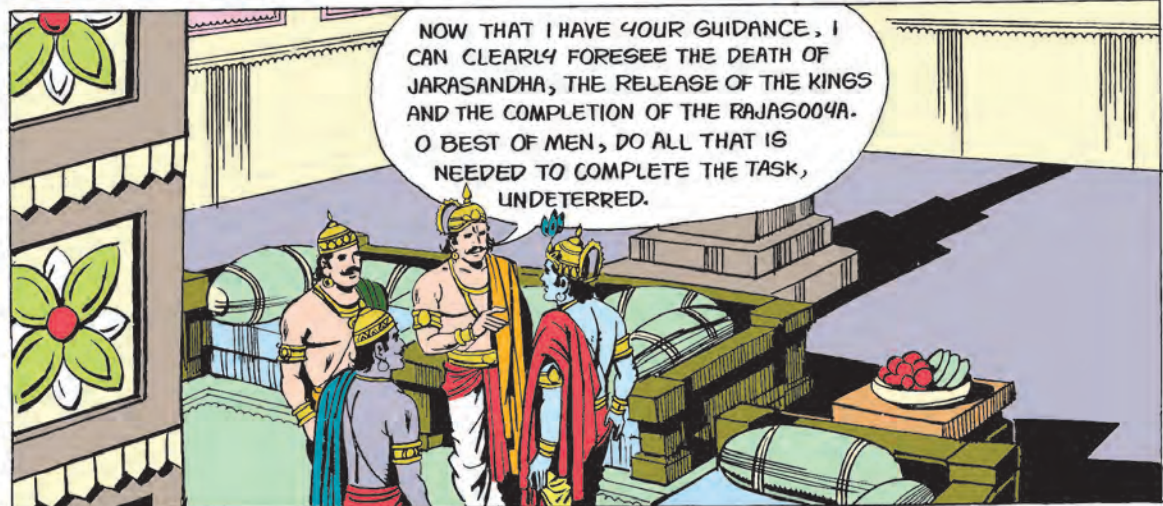
... CONFRONT THEIR FOES BRAVELY WITHOUT VIOLATING THE SHASTRAS.



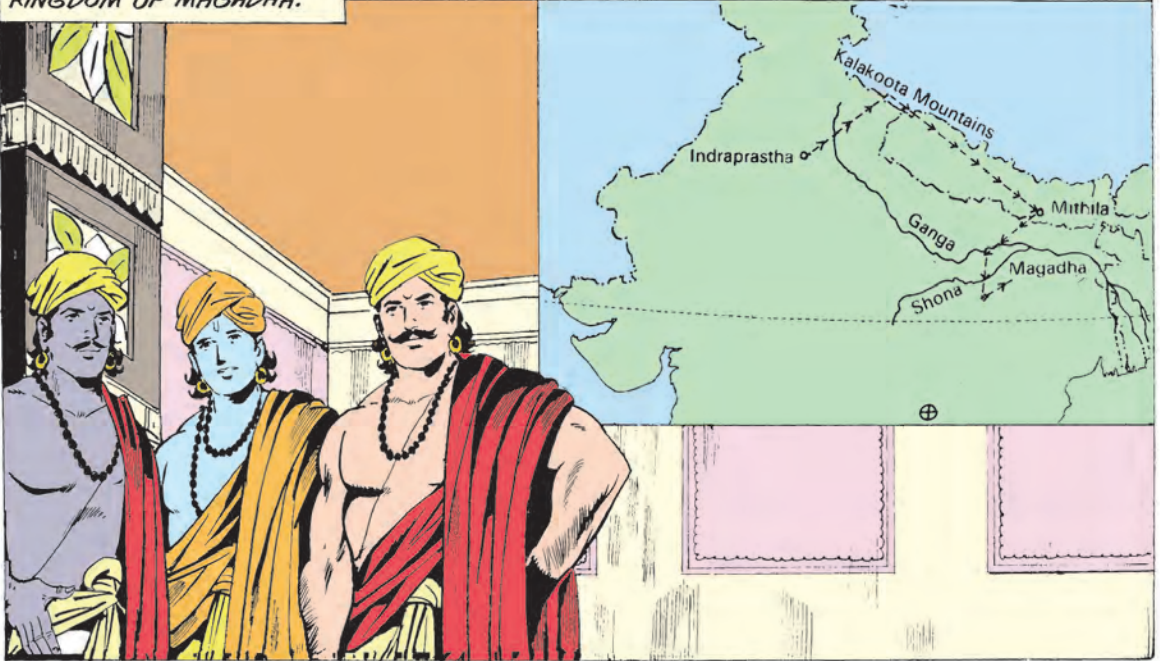




"BEHOLDING THE BRIGHTENED FACES OF BHEEMA AND ARJUNA, YUDHISHTHIRA SAID:



"THUS ADDRESSED BY YUDHISHTHIRA, O MONARCH, THE THREE SET OUT FOR MAGADHA DRESSED AS SNATAKA* BRAHMANAS. SETTING OUT FROM THE KURU KINGDOM THEY CROSSED THE KALAKOOTA MOUNTAIN, AS WELL AS SEVERAL RIVERS. THEY WENT ONWARD TO MITHILA, CROSSED THE GANGA AND THE SHONA WENDING THEIR WAY EASTWARD, TILL THEY ENTERED THE KINGDOM OF MAGADHA.



"ARRIVING AT THE HILLS OF GORATHA, THEY SAW THE CAPITAL OF MAGADHA. A WEALTHY CITY WITH PERENNIAL WATER-SUPPLY, WELL-EQUIPPED HOUSES AND HAPPY CITIZENS. AND KRISHNA SAID:

BEHOLD ARJUNA!
GIRIVRAJA, THE CAPITAL
OF MAGADHA, GUARDED
BY THAT CHAIN OF
FIVE HILLS.



* ONE WHO HAS LEARNT THE YEDAS.

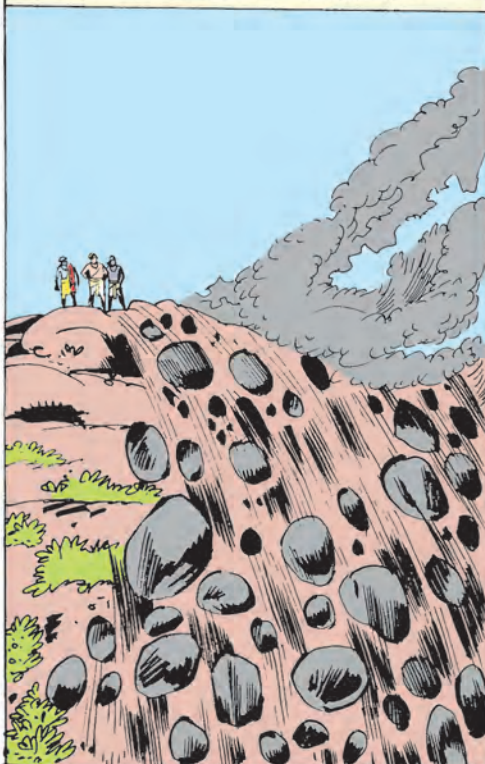
"THE THREE HEROES APPROACHED THE CITY BUT INSTEAD OF ENTERING IT BY THE CITY-GATES..."



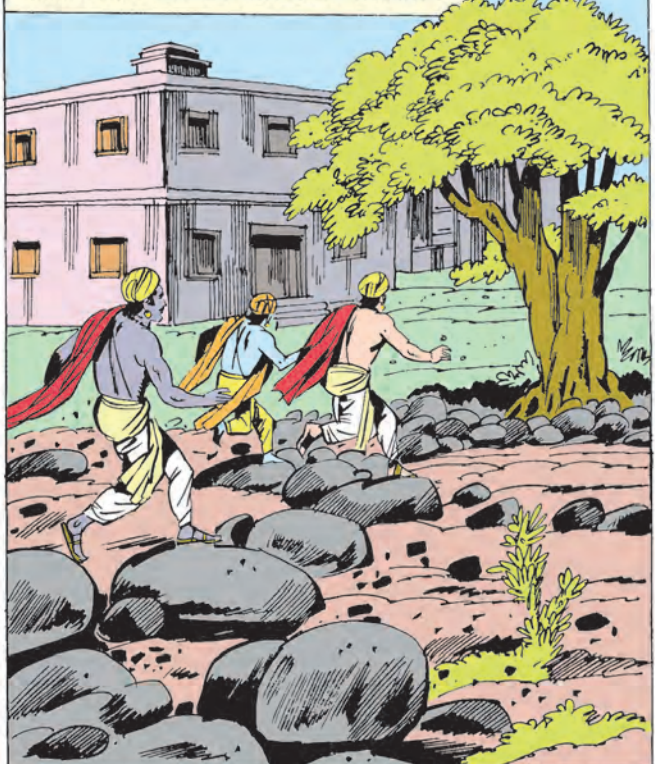
"...THEY WENT UP TO THE MASSIVE AND VENERABLE MOUNTAIN PEAK CHAITYAKA, ATTACKED IT..."



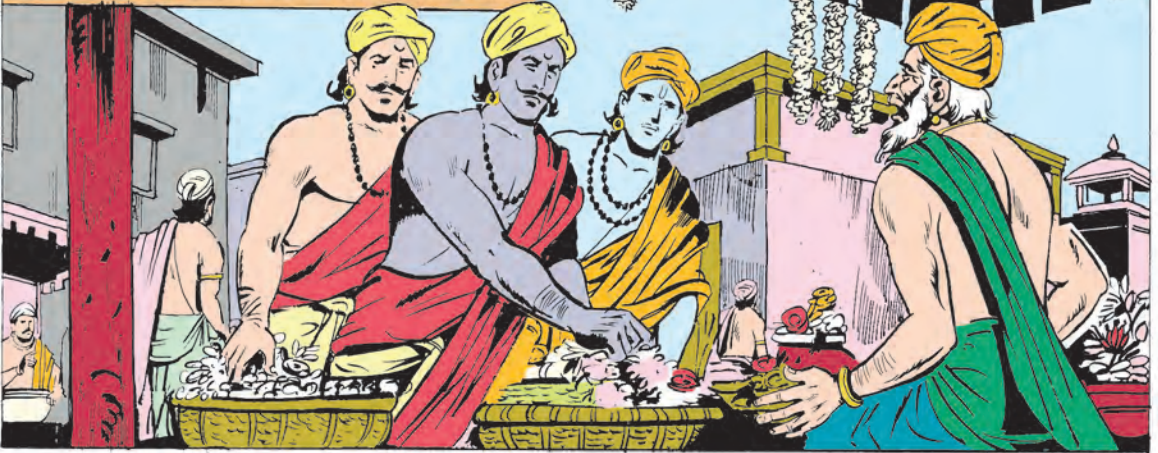
"...AND RAZED IT TO THE GROUND."



"AND ELATED, THEY ENTERED THE CITY."



"AS THEY WALKED UP THE ROYAL ROAD, THEY FORCIBLY TOOK FOR THEMSELVES SOME FLOWER GARLANDS FROM A VENDOR."



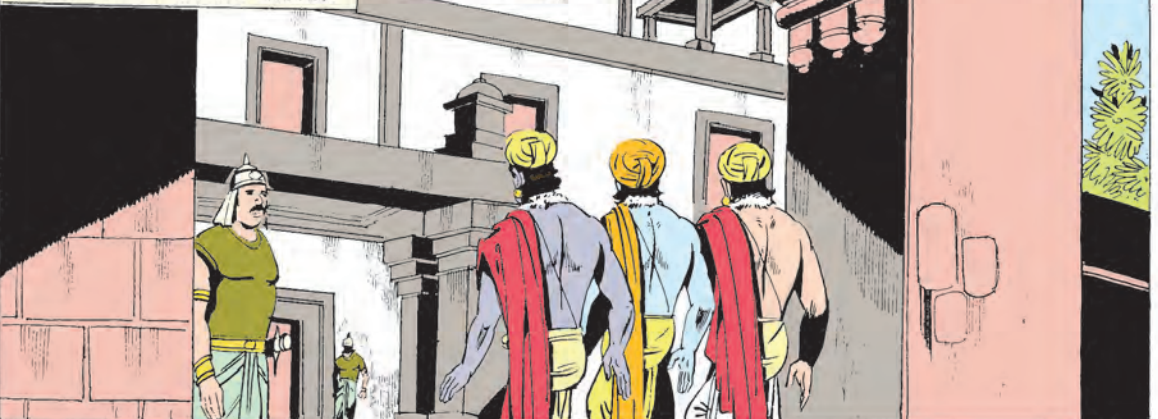
MEANWHILE THE BRAHMANAS OF THE CITY WENT TO JARASANDHA AND REPORTED TO HIM THE EVIL OMENS WHICH THEY HAD PERCEIVED.



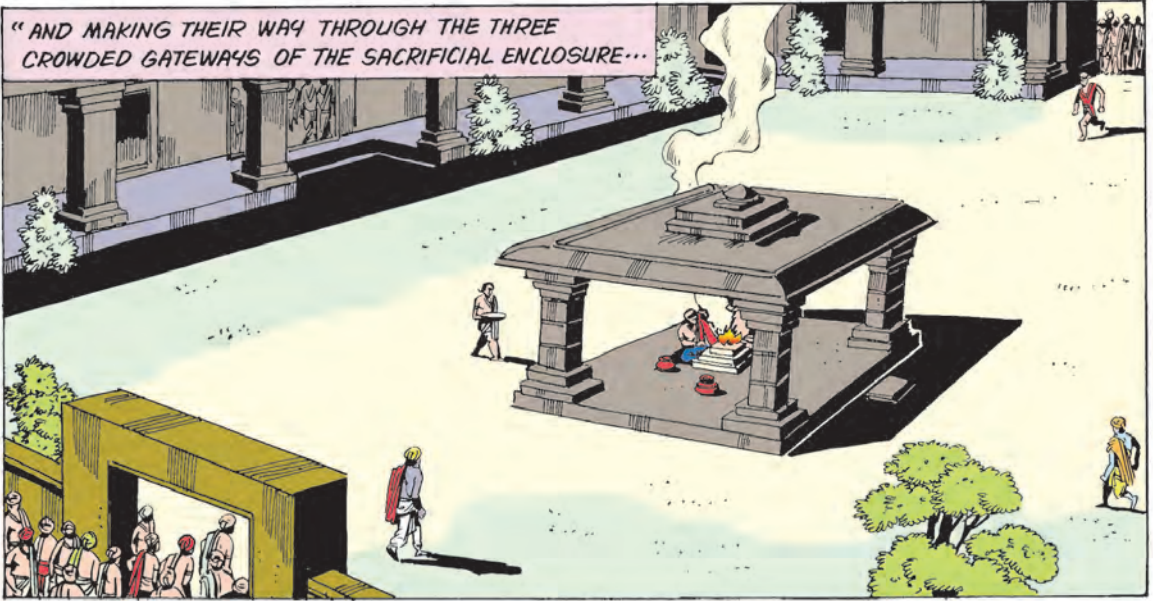
"THE KING THEREUPON STARTED SACRIFICIAL RITUALS TO WARD OFF ANY EVIL."



"THEN THE THREE HEROES, ATTIRED IN COLOURFUL ROBES AND ANOINTED WITH SANDAL-PASTE AND DECKED WITH FLOWER GARLANDS MARCHED INTO THE ABODE OF JARASANDHA."



"AND MAKING THEIR WAY THROUGH THE THREE CROWDED GATEWAYS OF THE SACRIFICIAL ENCLOSURE..."



"... THE FEARLESS AND PROUD ONES APPROACHED JARASANDHA. THE KING STOOD UP..."



"...AND RECEIVED THEM WITH BEFITTING HONOUR. HE SAID:

I WELCOME YOU.

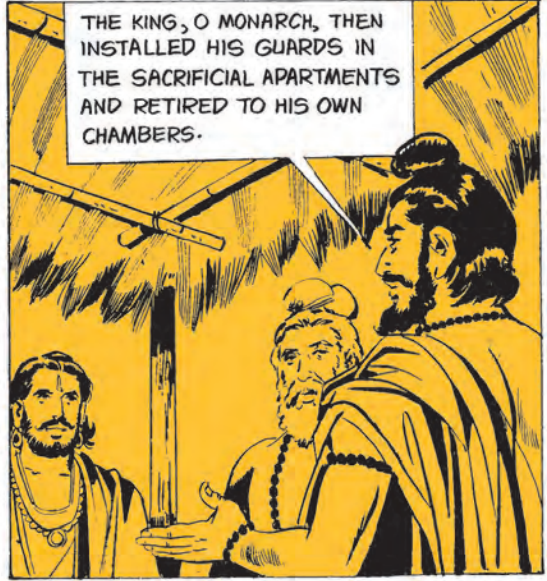


"WHILE BHEEMA AND ARJUNA STOOD SILENTLY, KRISHNA SAID:

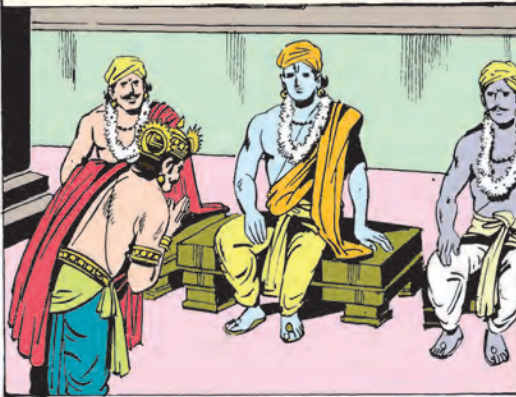
THESE TWO WILL
SPEAK TO YOU ONLY
AFTER MIDNIGHT AS
THEY ARE BOUND BY
A VOW.



THE KING, O MONARCH, THEN
INSTALLED HIS GUARDS IN
THE SACRIFICIAL APARTMENTS
AND RETIRED TO HIS OWN
CHAMBERS.



"THOUGH INTRIGUED BY THE ATTIRE OF HIS
GUESTS, THE KING VISITED THEM AFTER
MIDNIGHT AND WAITED ON THEM RESPECTFULLY.



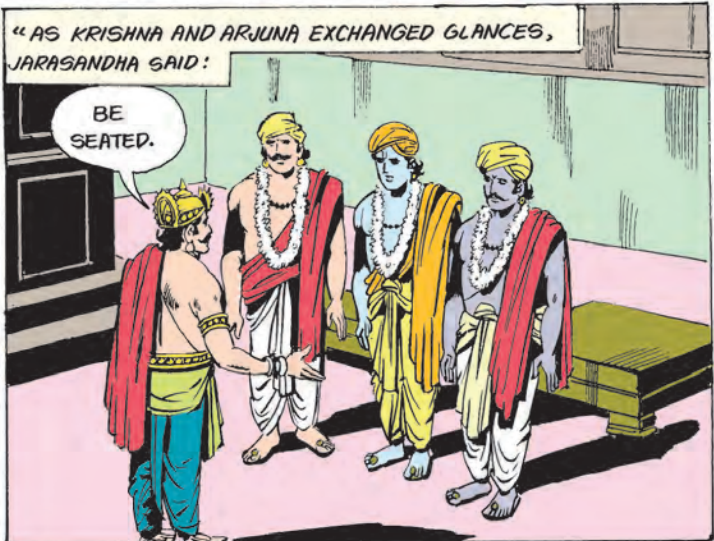
"THEN THEY SAID TO HIM:

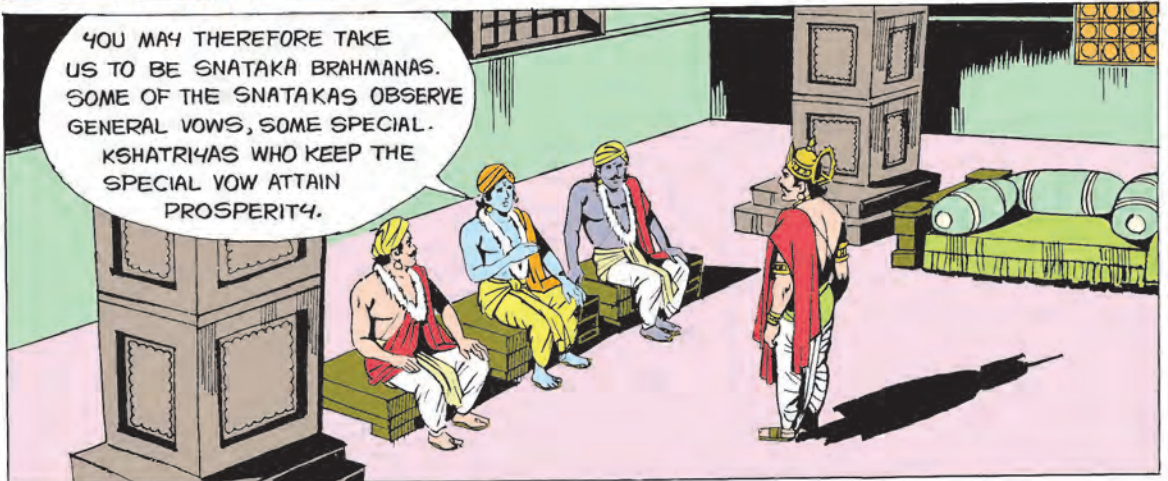
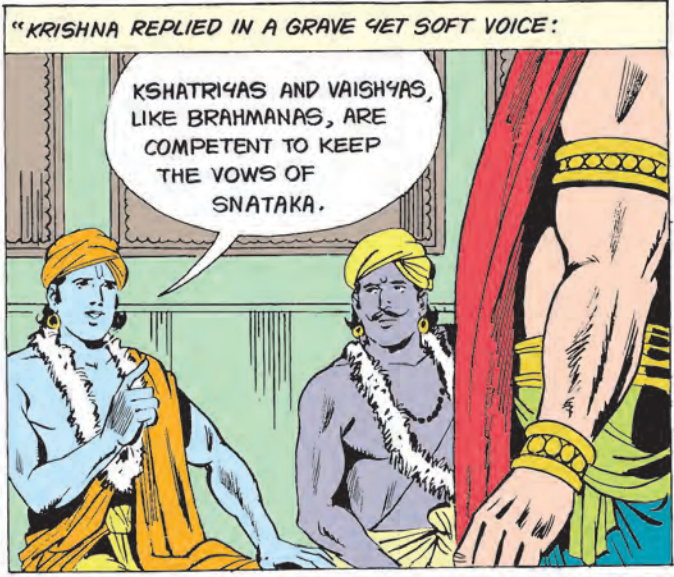
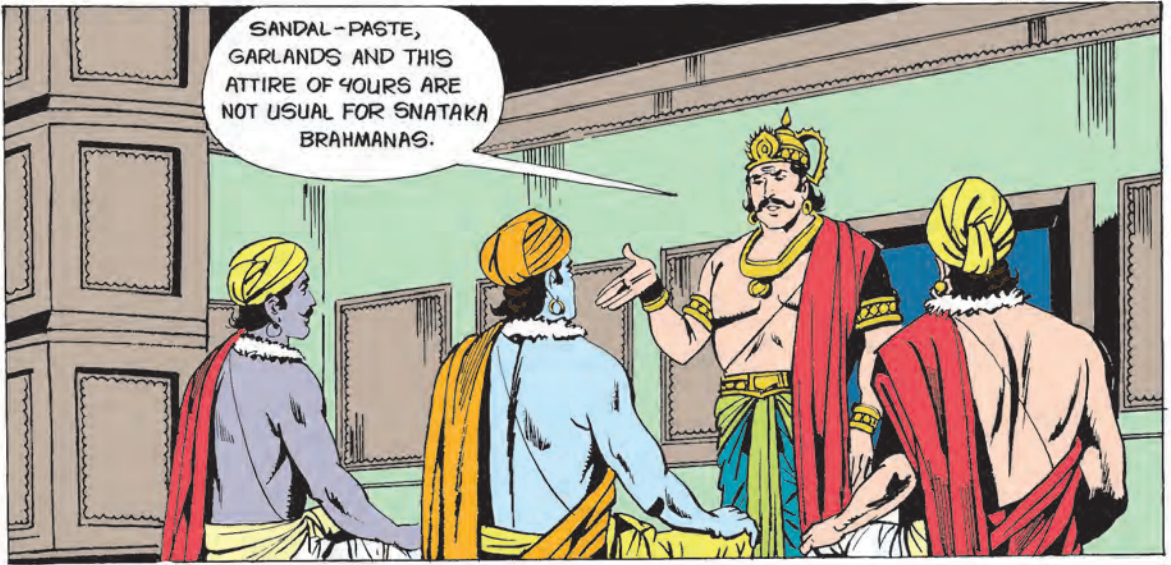
FARE YOU
WELL!



"AS KRISHNA AND ARJUNA EXCHANGED GLANCES,
JARASANDHA SAID:

BE
SEATED.





JARASANDHA SAID:

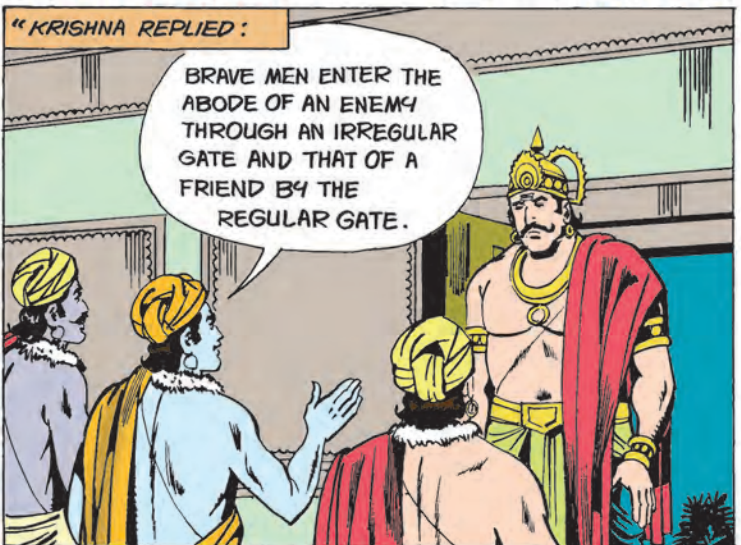
YOUR ENTRY OVER THE RAZED CHAITYAKA HILL IS AN ACT OF RECKLESS TRESPASS. THEN YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELVES AS BRAHMANAS, THOUGH YOU BEAR THE MARKS OF KSHATRIYA VIGOUR.



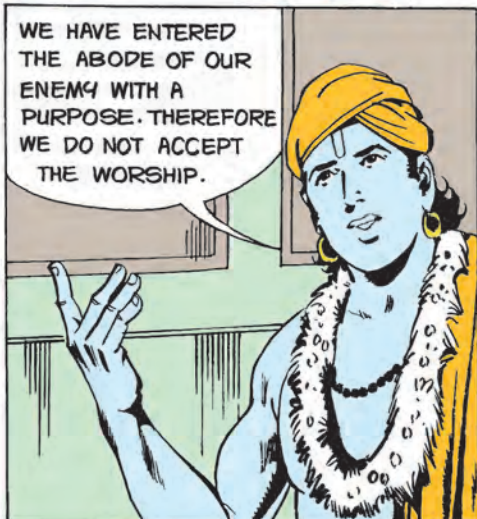
WHY ARE YOU RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT THE WORSHIP OFFERED BY ME? WHY ARE YOU HERE?

"KRISHNA REPLIED:

BRAVE MEN ENTER THE ABODE OF AN ENEMY THROUGH AN IRREGULAR GATE AND THAT OF A FRIEND BY THE REGULAR GATE.

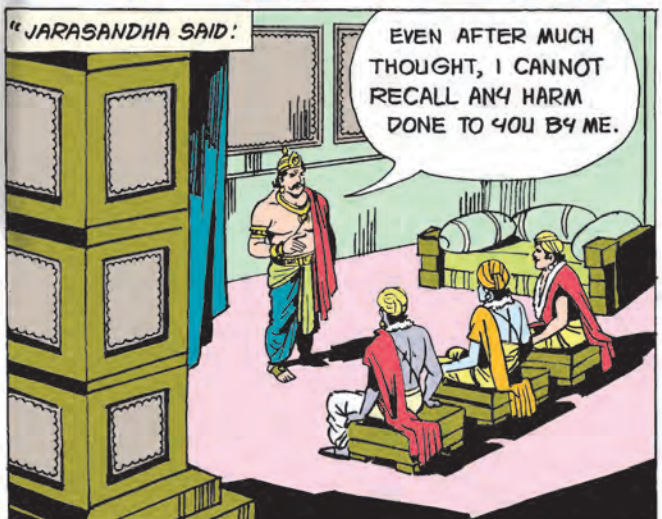


WE HAVE ENTERED THE ABODE OF OUR ENEMY WITH A PURPOSE. THEREFORE WE DO NOT ACCEPT THE WORSHIP.



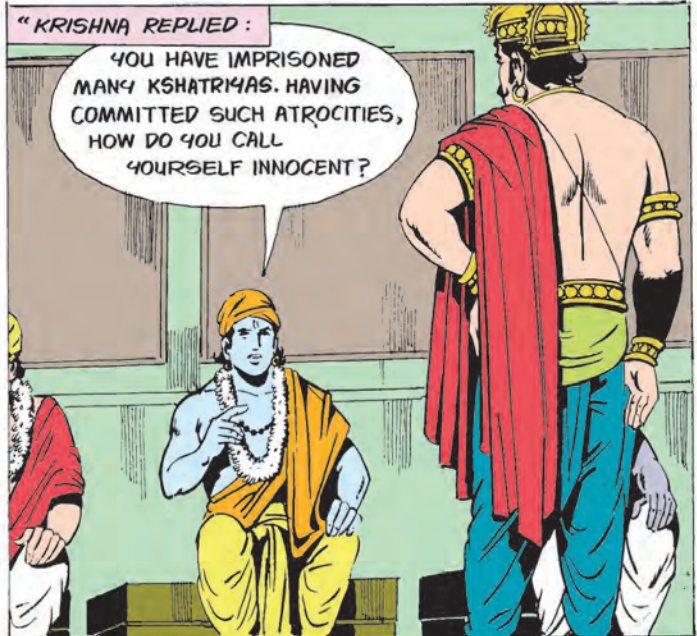
"JARASANDHA SAID:

EVEN AFTER MUCH THOUGHT, I CANNOT RECALL ANY HARM DONE TO YOU BY ME.





WHEN I AM INNOCENT
AND HAVE NOT HURT YOU
HOW DO I BECOME YOUR
ENEMY?



"KRISHNA REPLIED :

YOU HAVE IMPRISONED
MANY KSHATRIYAS. HAVING
COMMITTED SUCH ATROCITIES,
HOW DO YOU CALL
YOURSELF INNOCENT?



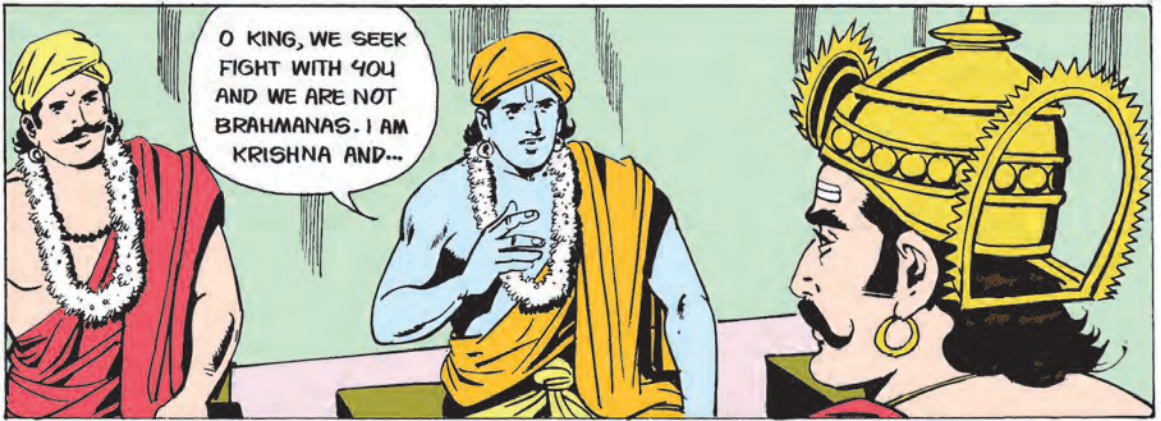
"JARASANDHA SAID:

I HAVE IMPRISONED
NONE WHO HAS NOT BEEN
FIRST VANQUISHED BY ME
IN BATTLE. IS THERE A KING
HERE NOT DEFEATED BY ME?
TO SUBDUE THE ENEMY BY
VALOUR IS MORAL FOR A
KSHATRIYA.



"KRISHNA SAID:

BUT YOU WANT TO SLAY THEM
AT THE ALTAR OF SHIVA. YOU
DEBASE THOSE OF YOUR
OWN RACE AS ANIMALS
FIT FOR SLAUGHTER.



"KRISHNA SAID :

O KING, WE HAVE
COME HERE TO SLAY
YOU FOR THE HARM
YOU HAVE DONE TO
OUR KSHATRIYA
RACE.



"JARASANDHA SAID:

I SHALL FIGHT. IS IT TO BE
SINGLE COMBAT WITH EACH
ONE OF YOU OR A BATTLE
BETWEEN OUR ARMIES IN ARRAY?
OR AM I TO FIGHT THE THREE
OF YOU? OR TWO OF YOU?



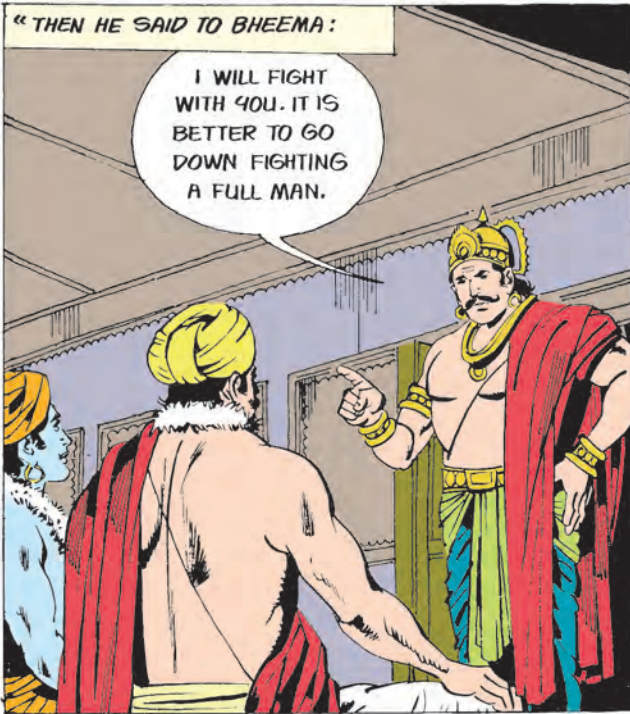
"THEN KRISHNA SAID :

O KING, WHOM WILL YOU
CHOOSE FOR SINGLE COMBAT
FROM AMONG US? WHO
AMONG US SHOULD PREPARE
HIMSELF FOR IT?

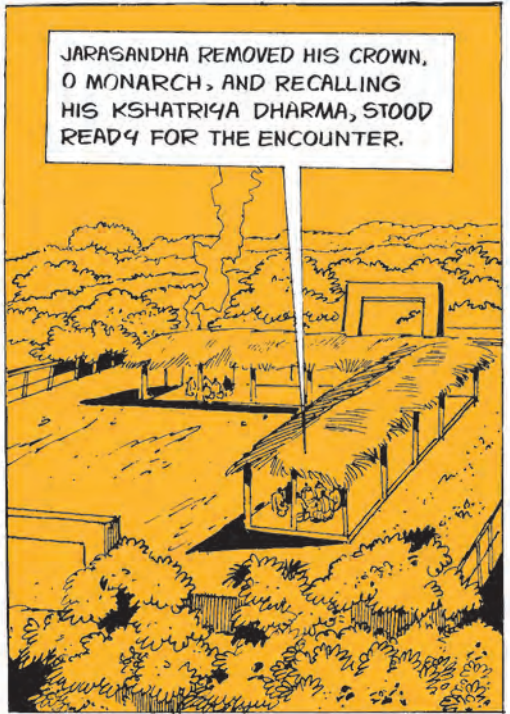


"THEN HE SAID TO BHEEMA:

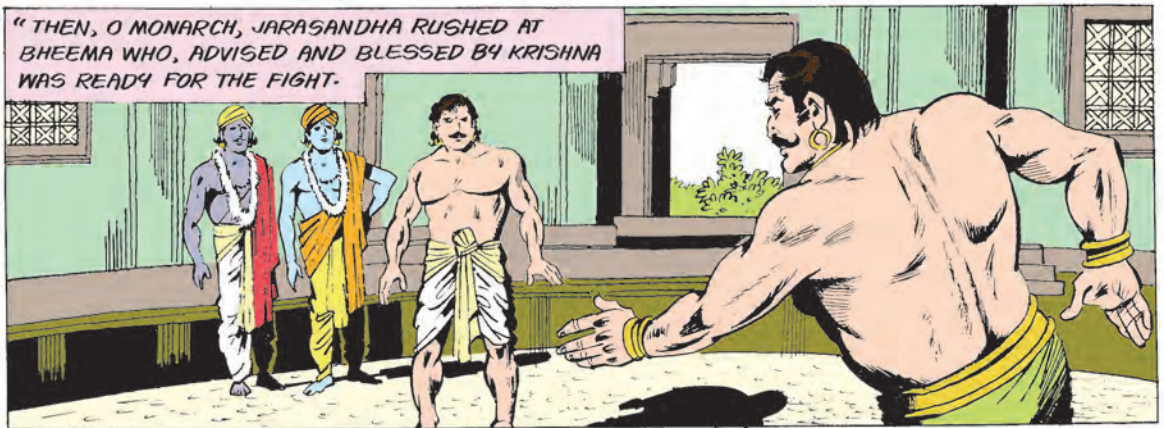
I WILL FIGHT
WITH YOU. IT IS
BETTER TO GO
DOWN FIGHTING
A FULL MAN.



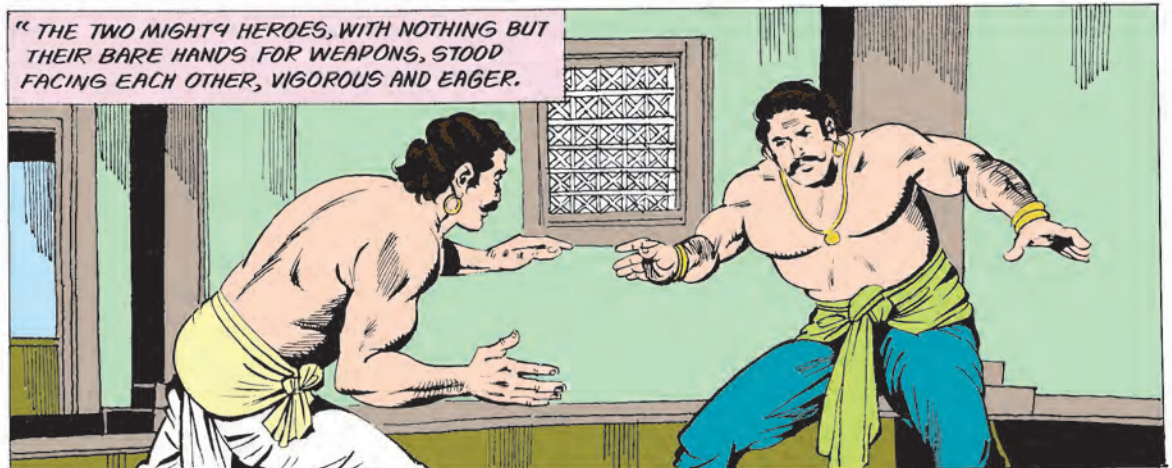
JARASANDHA REMOVED HIS CROWN,
O MONARCH, AND RECALLING
HIS KSHATRIYA DHARMA, STOOD
READY FOR THE ENCOUNTER.



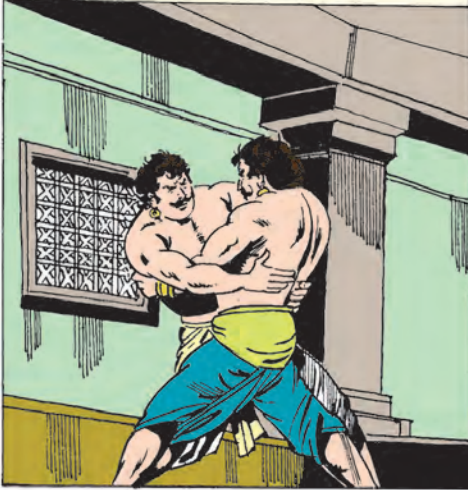
"THEN, O MONARCH, JARASANDHA RUSHED AT
BHEEMA WHO, ADVISED AND BLESSED BY KRISHNA
WAS READY FOR THE FIGHT.



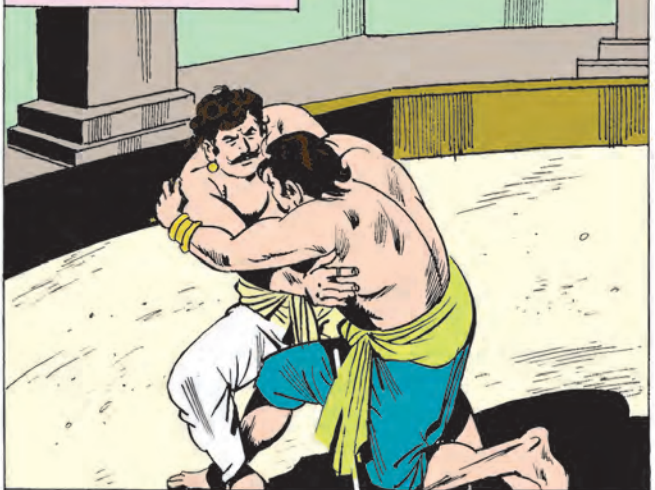
"THE TWO MIGHTY HEROES, WITH NOTHING BUT
THEIR BARE HANDS FOR WEAPONS, STOOD
FACING EACH OTHER, VIGOROUS AND EAGER.



"THEY FELL UPON EACH OTHER AND TRIED TO DRAG EACH OTHER DOWN."



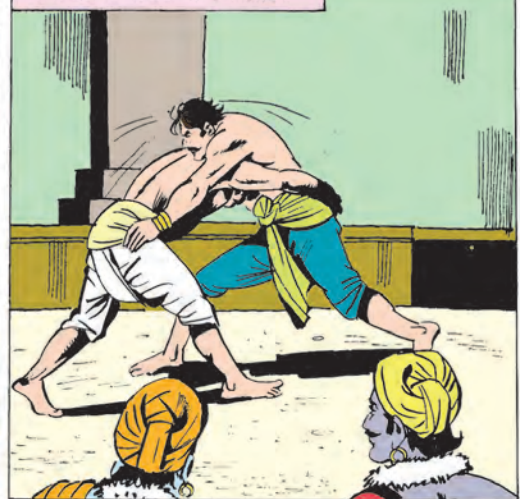
"THEY ENGAGED IN DIFFERENT HOLDS AND TRIED DIFFERENT LOCKS..."



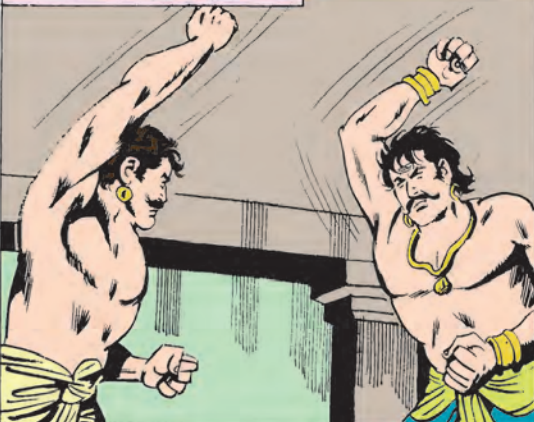
"... AND FIERY SPARKS FLEW OFF THEIR FOREHEADS AS THEY DASHED AGAINST EACH OTHER."



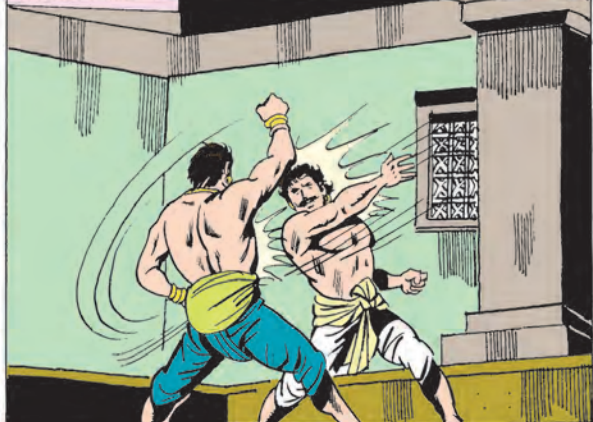
"GRIPPING THE OTHER'S WAIST EACH WOULD HIT OUT WITH HIS FOOT."



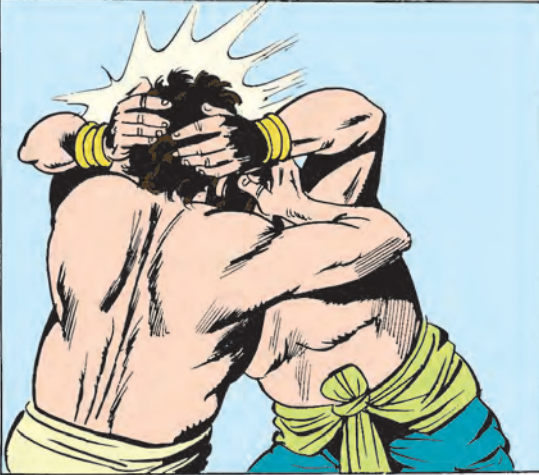
"WITH CLENCHED FISTS THEY AIMED THEIR BLOWS AT ONE LIMB..."



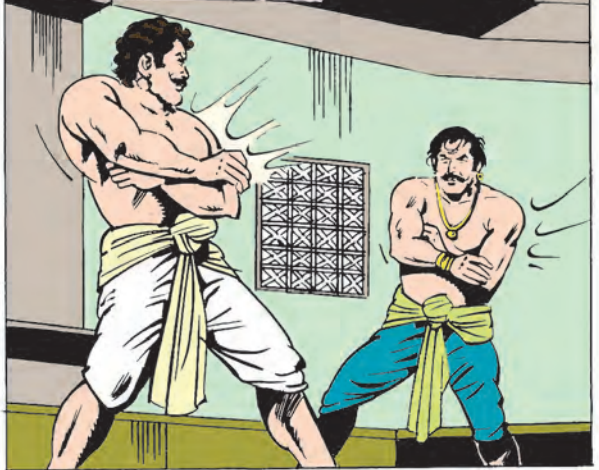
"... WHILE IT ACTUALLY FELL ON ANOTHER UNGUARDED."



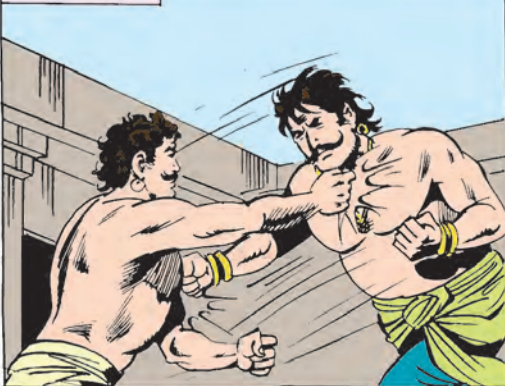
"EACH TRIED TO CRUSH THE SKULL OF THE OTHER WITH THE PROWESS OF HIS HANDS."



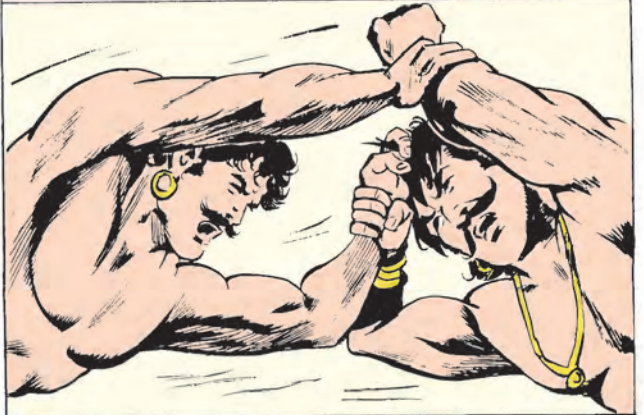
"THE SOUNDS THE WRESTLERS MADE WHILE SLAPPING THEIR ARMS..."



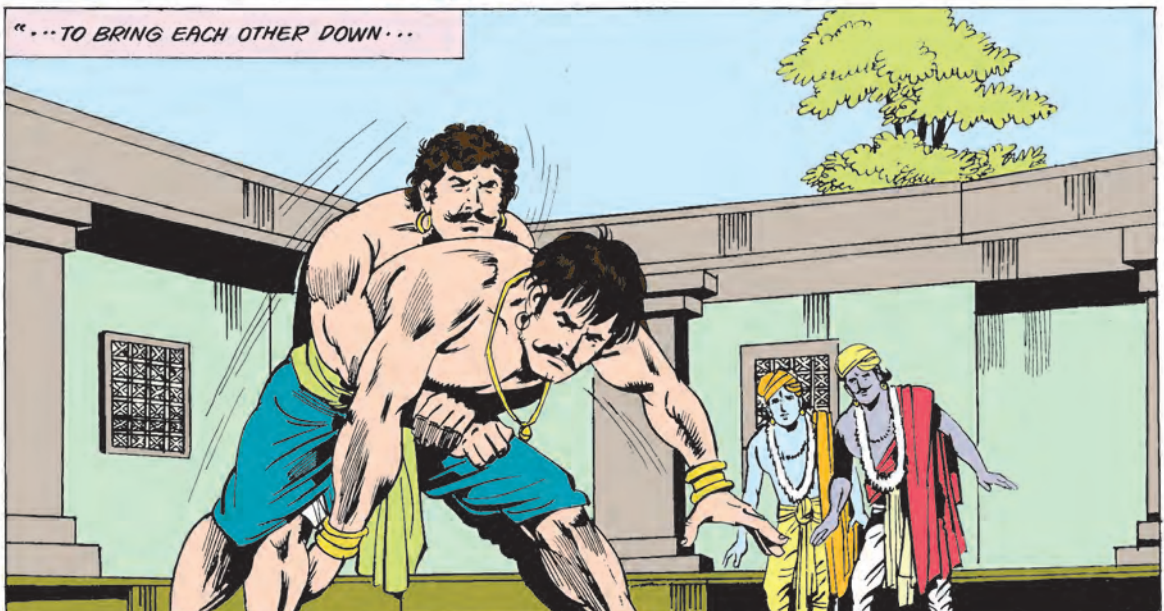
"...AND WHILE HITTING OUT AT EACH OTHER'S CHESTS..."



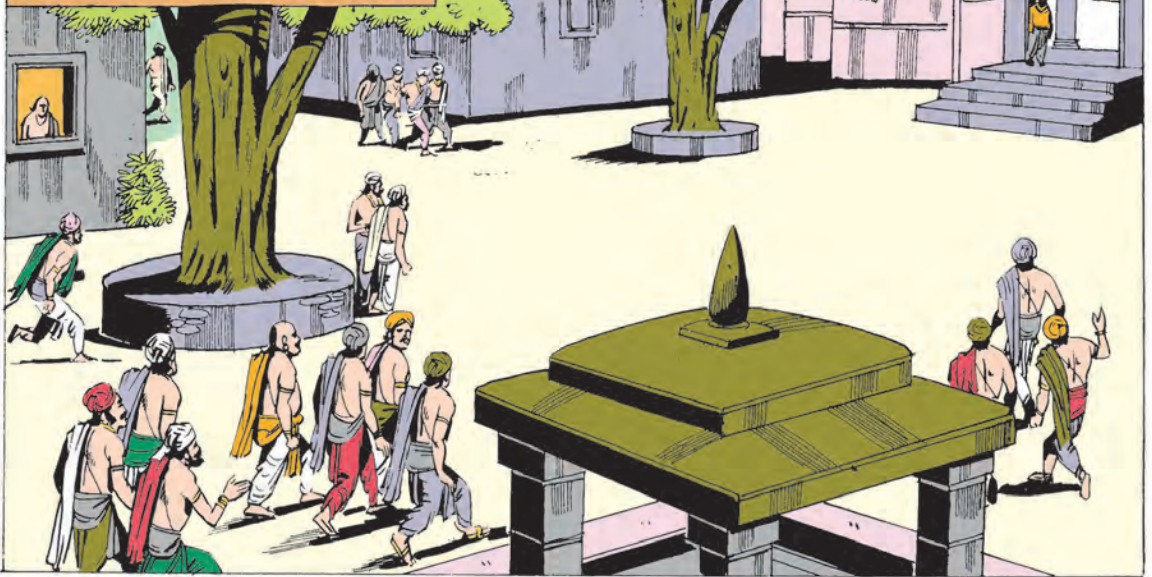
"...AND WHILE DRAWING IN THEIR BREATHS..."



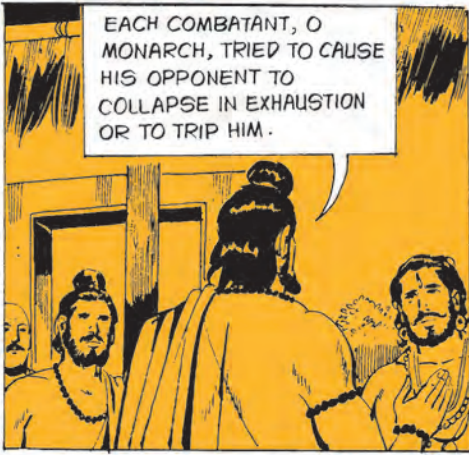
"...TO BRING EACH OTHER DOWN..."



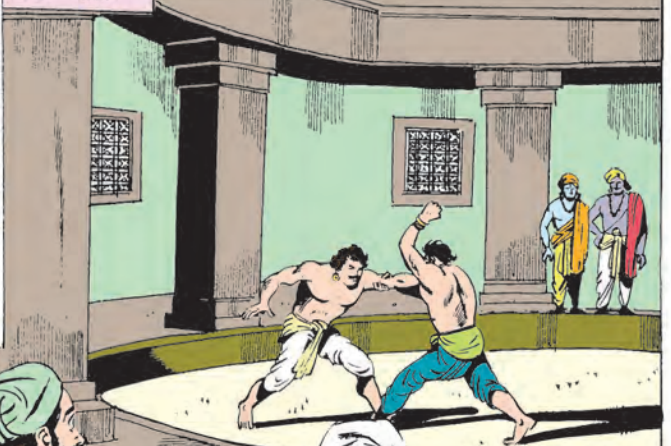
"...WERE LOUD LIKE THE ROAR OF THUNDER OR OF CRUMBLING CLIFFS. AND THE CITIZENS—MEN AND WOMEN OF DIVERSE STATIONS—THRONED THE PLACE TO WITNESS THE SPECTACLE.

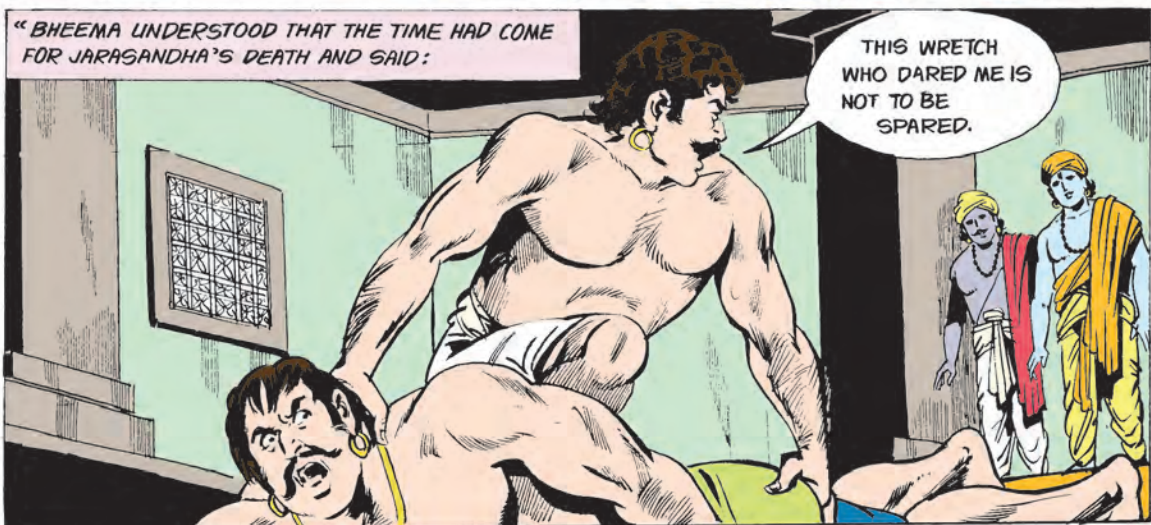
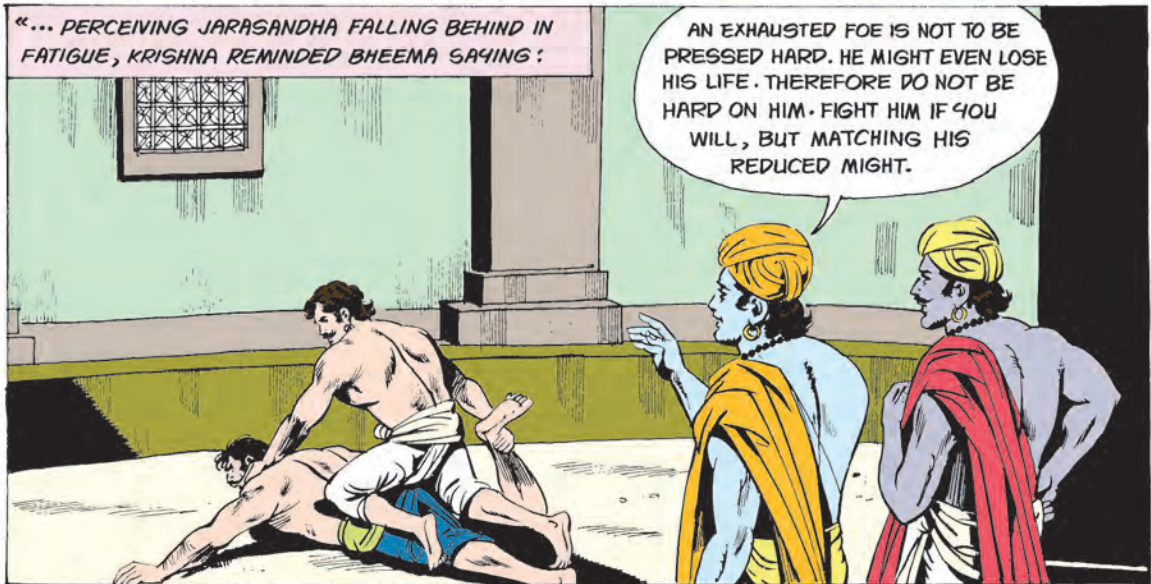
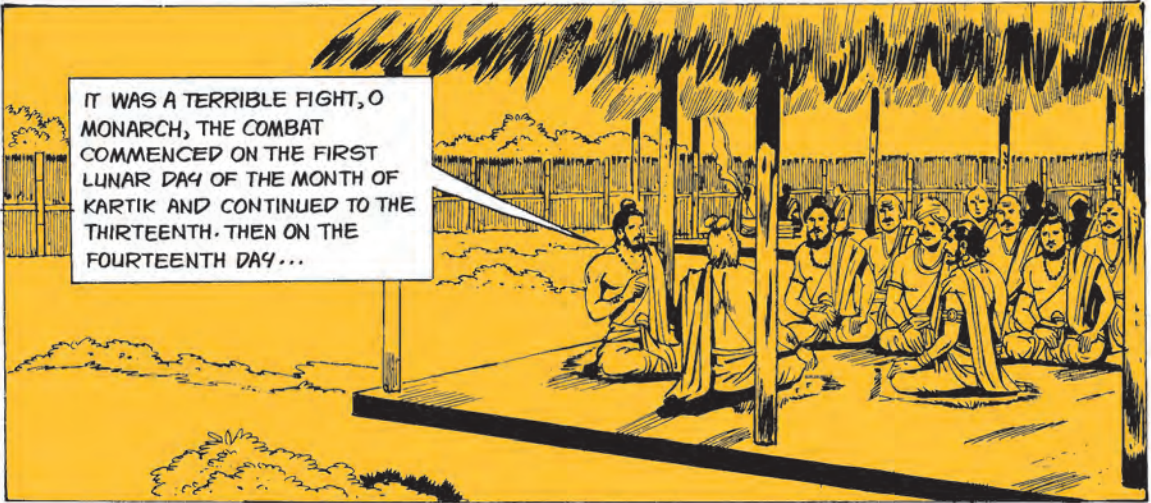


EACH COMBATANT, O MONARCH, TRIED TO CAUSE HIS OPPONENT TO COLLAPSE IN EXHAUSTION OR TO TRIP HIM.



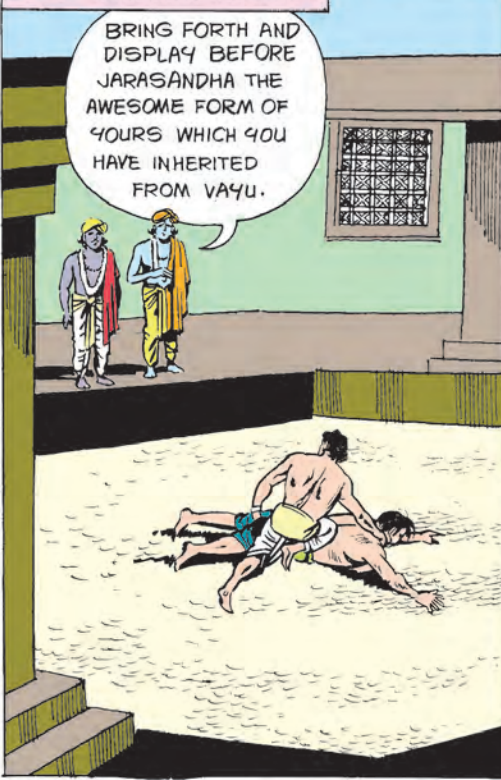
"THEY WERE BOTH MEN OF IMMENSE STRENGTH AND THEY DELIGHTED IN TESTING IT. EACH WAS ANXIOUS FOR A QUICK VICTORY AND THEY LOOKED FOR VULNERABLE POINTS IN HIS RIVAL."



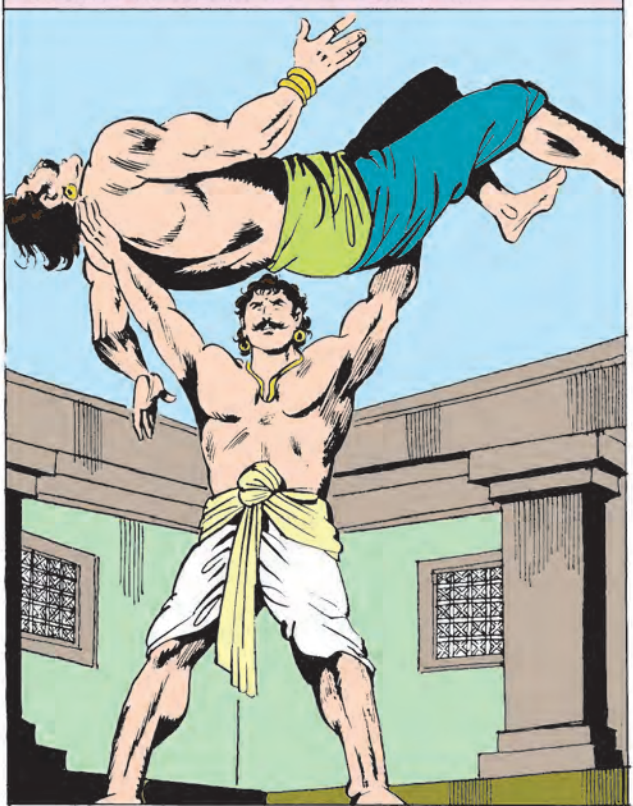


"KRISHNA, KEEN TO HASTEN THE DEATH OF JARASANDHA, REPLIED:

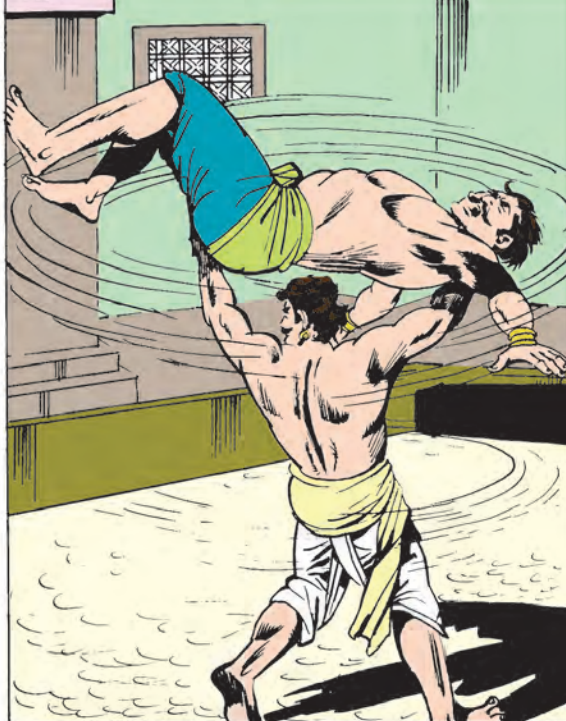
BRING FORTH AND
DISPLAY BEFORE
JARASANDHA THE
AWESOME FORM OF
YOURS WHICH YOU
HAVE INHERITED
FROM VAYU.



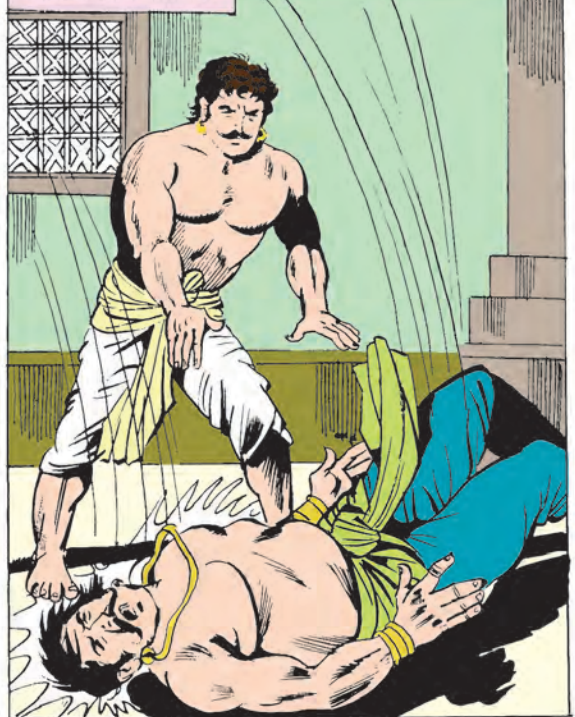
"THEREUPON BHEEMA LIFTED UP JARASANDHA..."



"...AND HOLDING HIM ALOFT BEGAN WHIRLING HIM."



"AND HAVING WHIRLED HIM A HUNDRED TIMES HE THREW HIM DOWN."

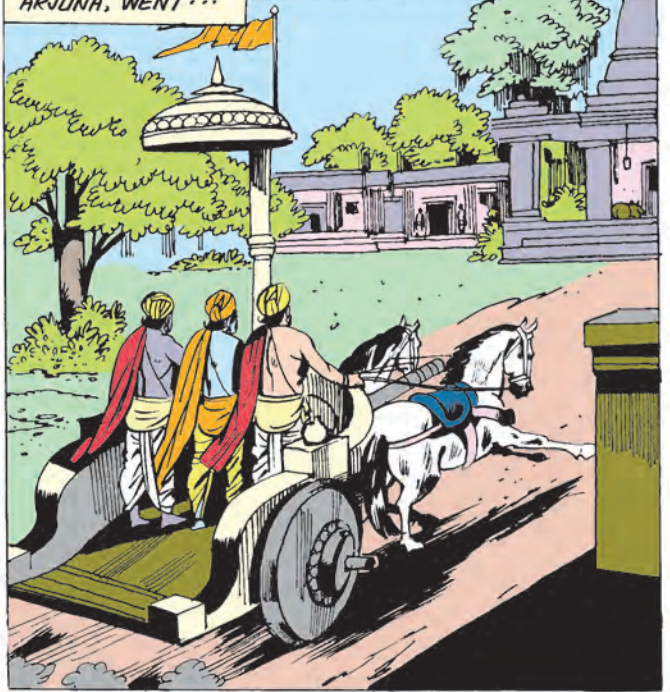


THEN PRESSING HIS KNEES
AGAINST THE FALLEN FOE,
BROKE HIS BACK AND TORE
HIS BODY IN TWO.

THE TRIUMPHANT ROAR OF
BHEEMA AND THE DYING
SHRIEK OF JARASANDHA,
O MONARCH, MINGLED INTO
A TERRIBLE SOUND THAT
STRUCK TERROR IN THE
HEARTS OF ALL CITIZENS
OF MAGADHA.



" THEN KRISHNA BROUGHT FORTH THE CHARIOT OF
JARASANDHA AND, ASCENDING IT WITH BHEEMA AND
ARJUNA, WENT ...



"...AND SET FREE THE IMPRISONED KINGS .



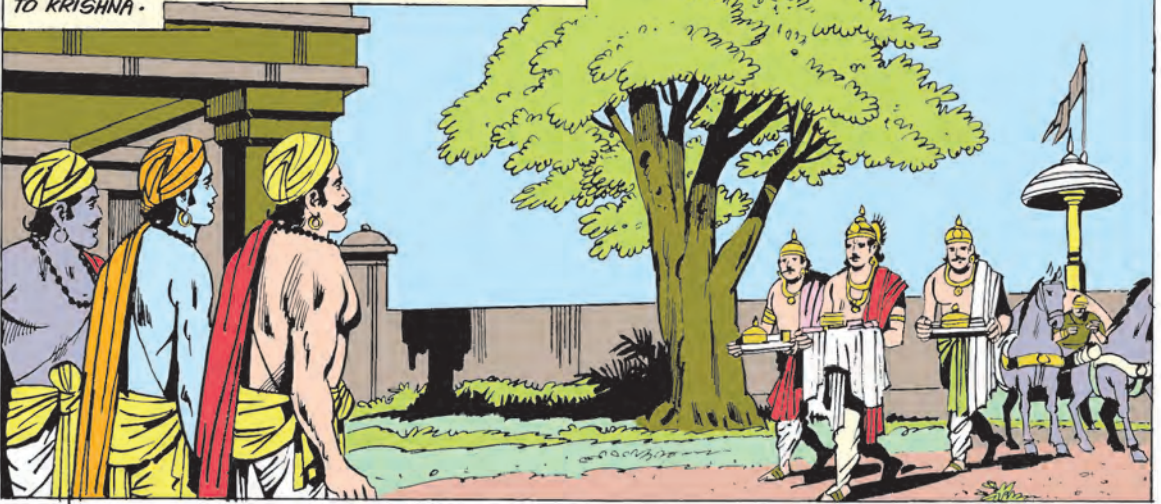
"AND THEY SAID :

IT IS NOT SURPRISING
THAT OUR DELIVERANCE
HAS BEEN AT YOUR HANDS
WITH THE ASSISTANCE
OF BHEEMA AND
ARJUNA .

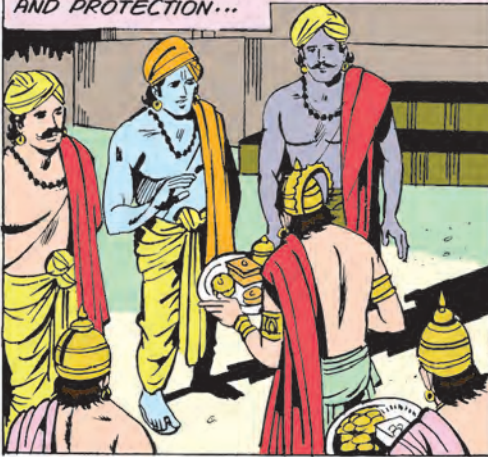




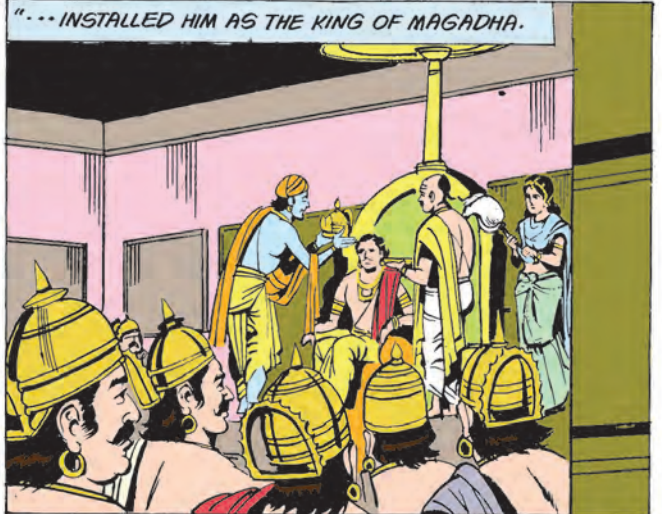
" THEN SAHADEVA*, THE LARGE- HEARTED SON OF JARASANDHA, CAME THERE WITH HIS RETINUE AND BROUGHT GIFTS OF PRECIOUS GEMS AND BOWED TO KRISHNA -



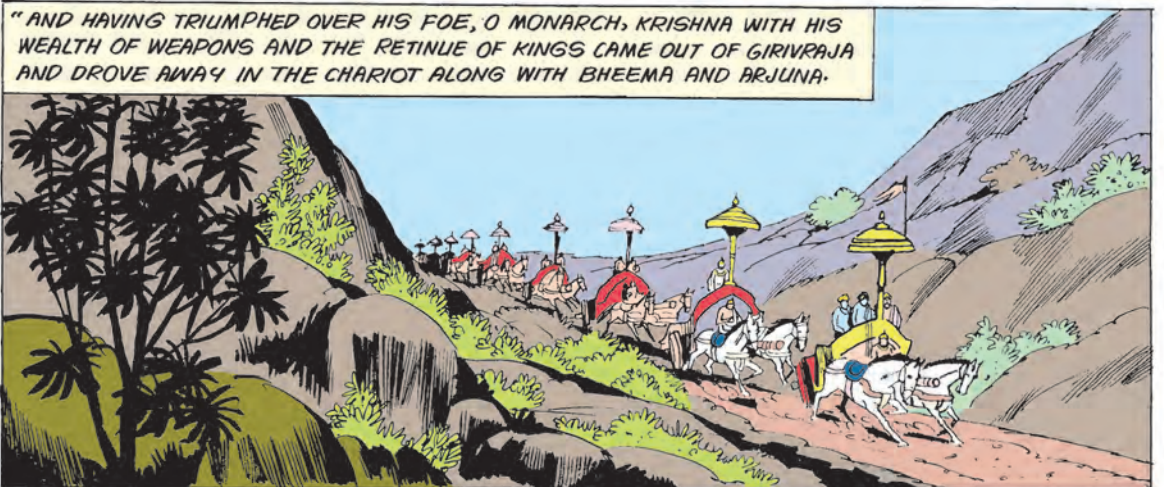
" KRISHNA ACCEPTED THE GIFTS AND ASSURING THE PRINCE OF SAFE CONDUCT AND PROTECTION...



"...INSTALLED HIM AS THE KING OF MAGADHA.



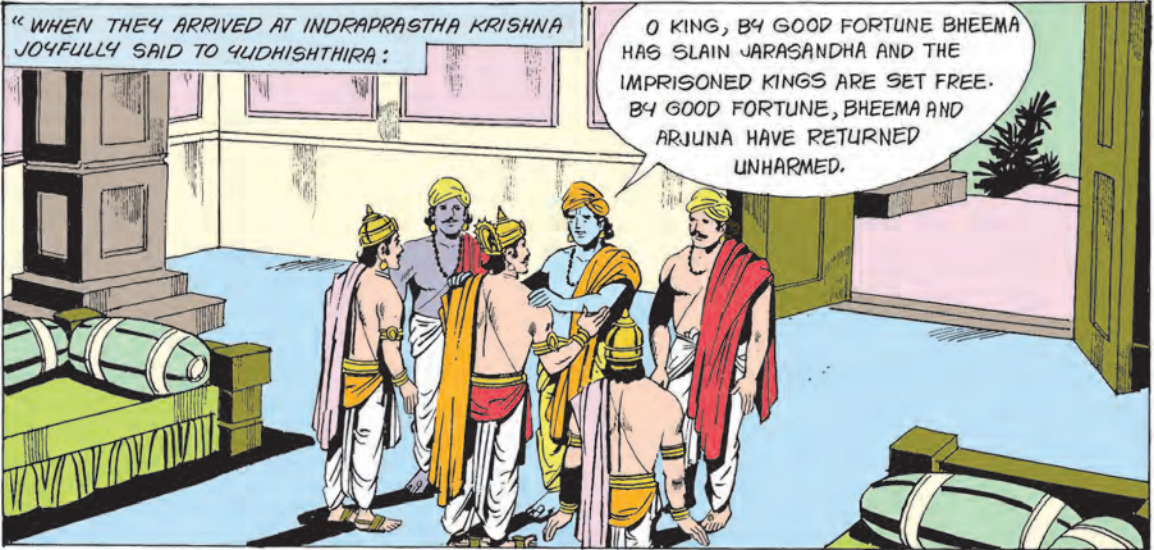
" AND HAVING TRIUMPHED OVER HIS FOE, O MONARCH, KRISHNA WITH HIS WEALTH OF WEAPONS AND THE RETINUE OF KINGS CAME OUT OF GIRIVRAJA AND DROVE AWAY IN THE CHARIOT ALONG WITH BHEEMA AND ARJUNA.



* NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH SAHADEVA, THE PANDAVA.

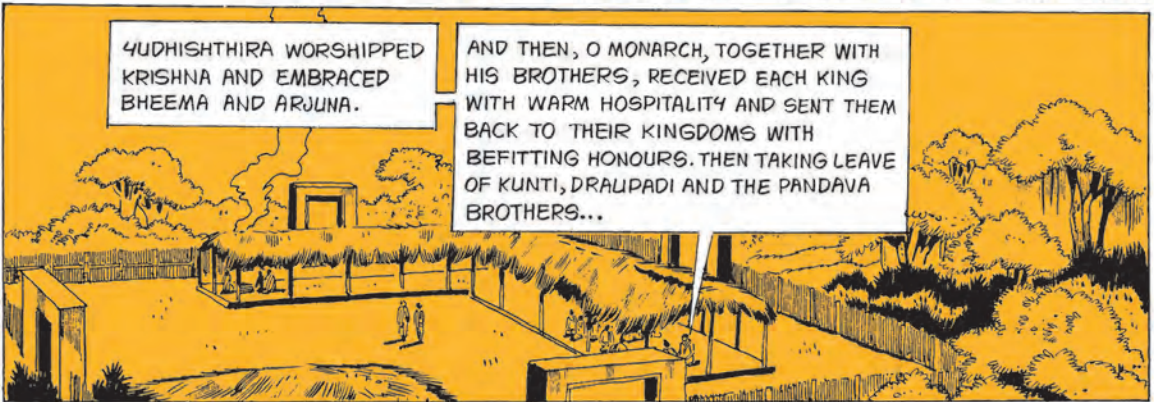
"WHEN THEY ARRIVED AT INDRAPRASTHA KRISHNA JOYFULLY SAID TO YUDHISHTHIRA:

O KING, BY GOOD FORTUNE BHEEMA HAS SLAIN JARASANDHA AND THE IMPRISONED KINGS ARE SET FREE. BY GOOD FORTUNE, BHEEMA AND ARJUNA HAVE RETURNED UNHARMED.

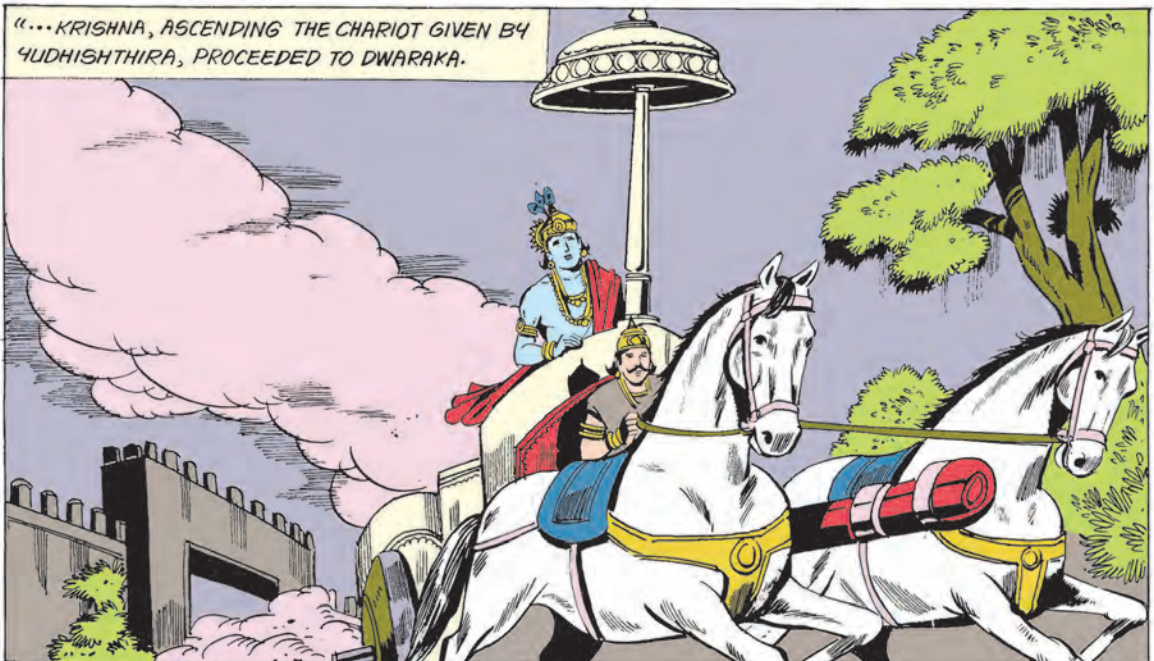


YUDHISHTHIRA WORSHIPPED KRISHNA AND EMBRACED BHEEMA AND ARJUNA.

AND THEN, O MONARCH, TOGETHER WITH HIS BROTHERS, RECEIVED EACH KING WITH WARM HOSPITALITY AND SENT THEM BACK TO THEIR KINGDOMS WITH BEFITTING HONOURS. THEN TAKING LEAVE OF KUNTI, DRAUPADI AND THE PANDAVA BROTHERS...

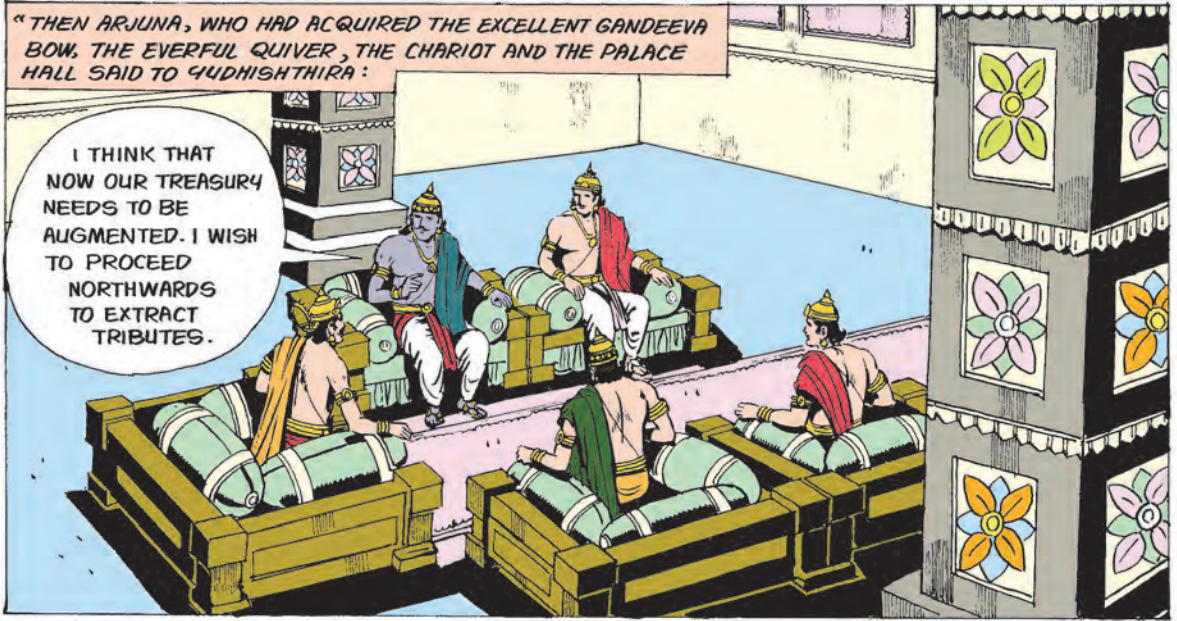


"...KRISHNA, ASCENDING THE CHARIOT GIVEN BY YUDHISHTHIRA, PROCEEDED TO DWARAKA.



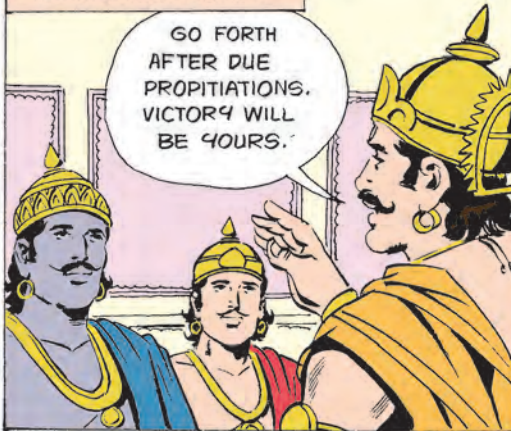
"THEN ARJUNA, WHO HAD ACQUIRED THE EXCELLENT GANDEEVA BOW, THE EVERFUL QUIVER, THE CHARIOT AND THE PALACE HALL SAID TO YUDHISHTHIRA :

I THINK THAT NOW OUR TREASURY NEEDS TO BE AUGMENTED. I WISH TO PROCEED NORTHWARDS TO EXTRACT TRIBUTES.



"YUDHISHTHIRA SAID:

GO FORTH AFTER DUE PROPITIATIONS. VICTORY WILL BE YOURS.

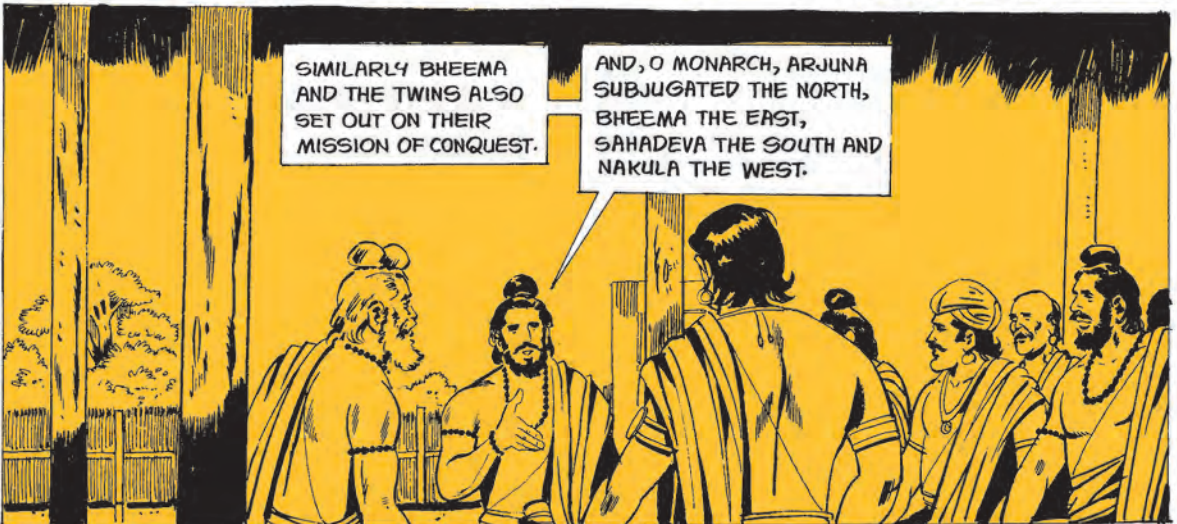


"ARJUNA THEN SET OUT IN HIS MIRACULOUS CHARIOT GIVEN BY AGNI. A VAST ARMY WENT WITH HIM.



SIMILARLY BHEEMA AND THE TWINS ALSO SET OUT ON THEIR MISSION OF CONQUEST.

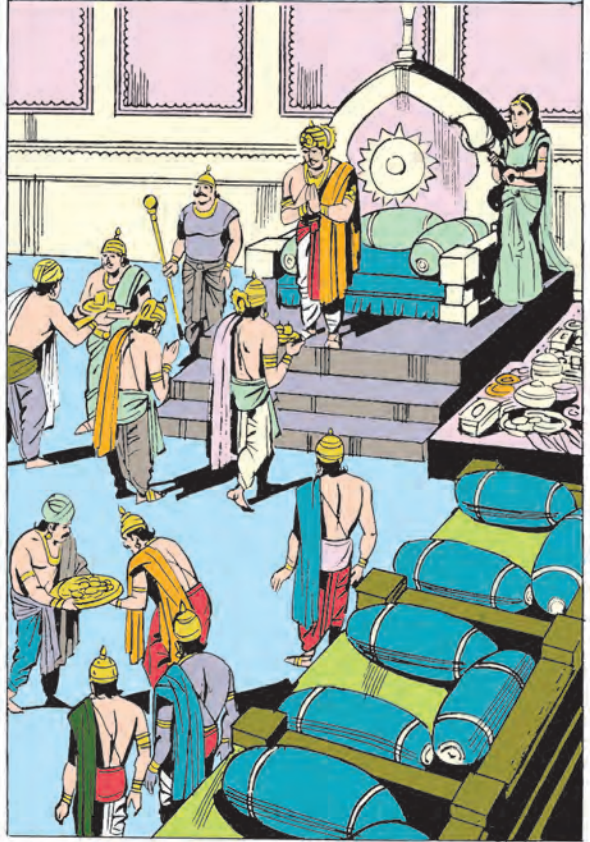
AND, O MONARCH, ARJUNA SUBJUGATED THE NORTH, BHEEMA THE EAST, SAHADEVA THE SOUTH AND NAKULA THE WEST.



"AND UNDER THE JUST RULE OF YUDHISHTHIRA, EVEN CHEATS AND THIEVES AND Sycophants spoke no lies; AND TRADE, AGRICULTURE AND CATTLE - WEALTH PROSPERED, POLITICAL STABILITY PREVAILED.



"KINGS APPROACHED HIM EITHER WITH RESPECT OR IN FRIENDSHIP BUT NEVER IN DISCORD..."



... AND HIS TREASURY WAS FILLED WITH SUCH BOUNTY AS TO LAST HUNDREDS OF YEARS.

AND YUDHISHTHIRA, AFTER ASSESSING THE MEANS AT HIS DISPOSAL, DECIDED TO PERFORM THE RAJASOOYA.



THUS ENDS THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF OUR RENDERING OF VAISHAMPAYANA'S RECITAL OF VYASA'S IMMORTAL ITIHASA THE MAHABHARATA.

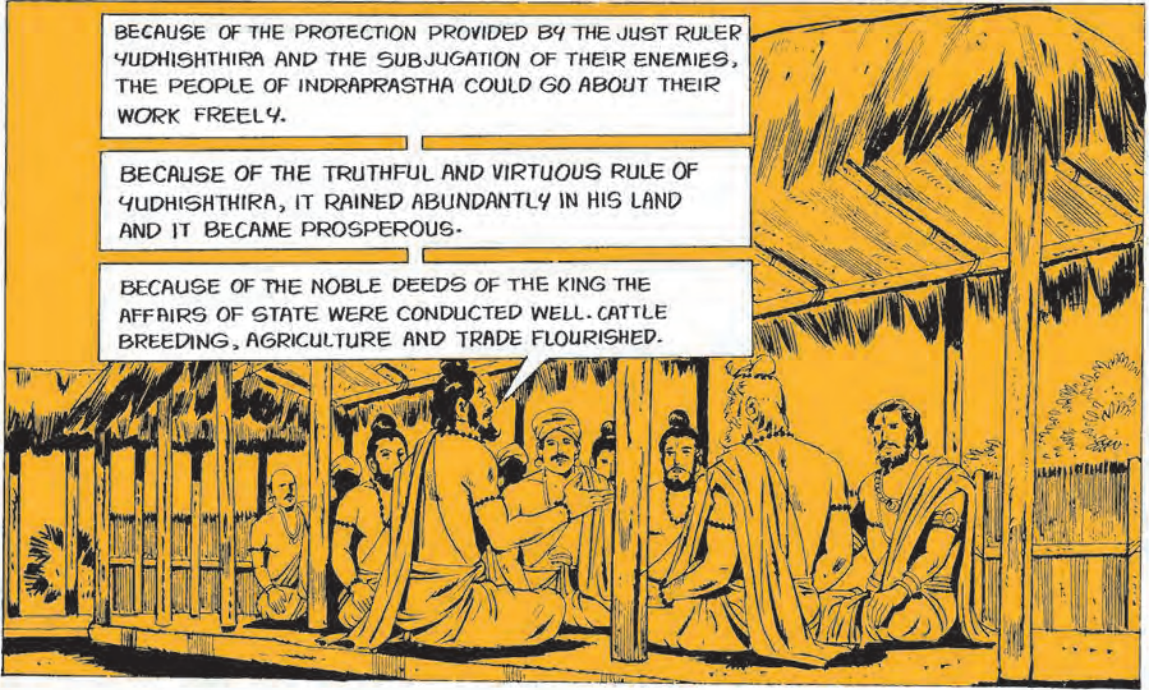
Mahabharata - 17

YUDHISHTHIRA'S RAJASOOYA YAJNA

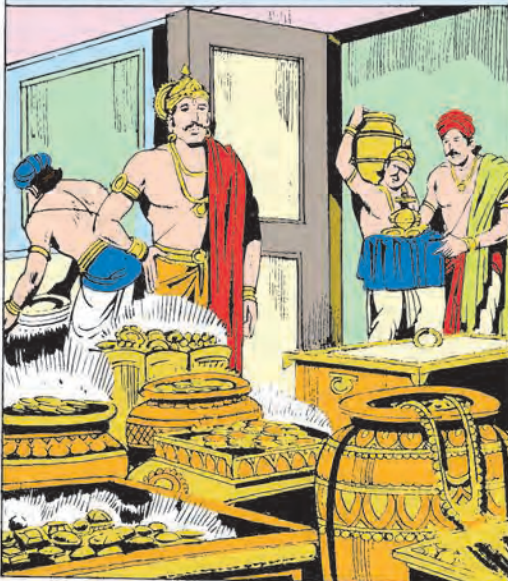
BECAUSE OF THE PROTECTION PROVIDED BY THE JUST RULER YUDHISHTHIRA AND THE SUBJUGATION OF THEIR ENEMIES, THE PEOPLE OF INDRAPRASTHA COULD GO ABOUT THEIR WORK FREELY.

BECAUSE OF THE TRUTHFUL AND VIRTUOUS RULE OF YUDHISHTHIRA, IT RAINED ABUNDANTLY IN HIS LAND AND IT BECAME PROSPEROUS.

BECAUSE OF THE NOBLE DEEDS OF THE KING THE AFFAIRS OF STATE WERE CONDUCTED WELL. CATTLE BREEDING, AGRICULTURE AND TRADE FLOURISHED.



"THROUGH COLLECTION OF JUST LEVIES THE TREASURY OF THE PANDAVAS BECAME SO BOUNTIFUL THAT IT SEEMED IT COULD NOT BE EXHAUSTED IN HUNDREDS OF YEARS."



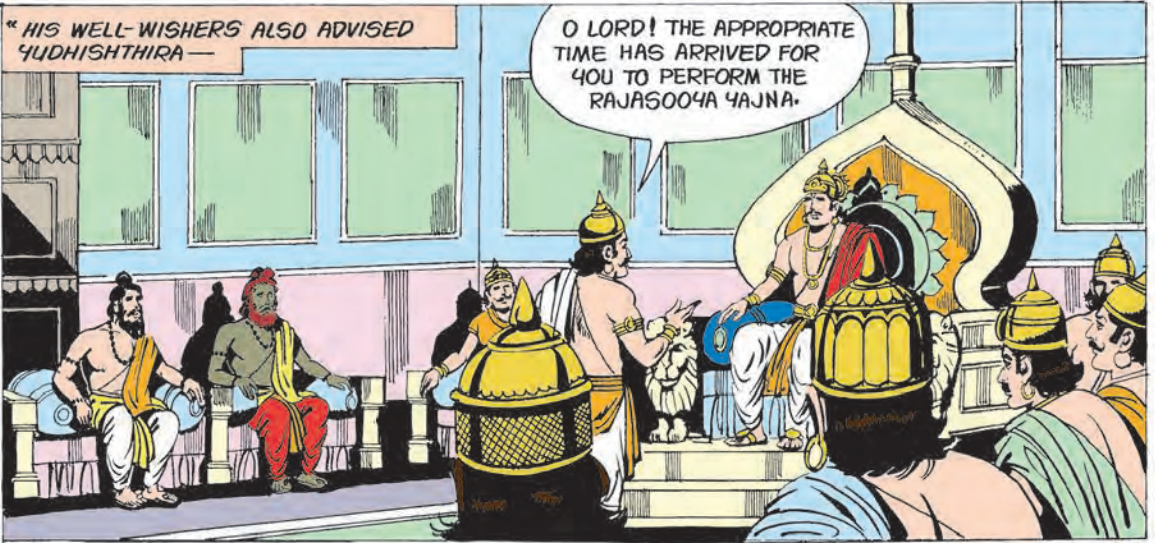
"HAVING IN MIND THE VASTNESS OF HIS TREASURES, YUDHISHTHIRA SAID TO HIMSELF:

I MUST PERFORM THE RAJASOOYA YAJNA.



"HIS WELL-WISHERS ALSO ADVISED YUDHISHTHIRA —

O LORD! THE APPROPRIATE TIME HAS ARRIVED FOR YOU TO PERFORM THE RAJASOOYA YAJNA.



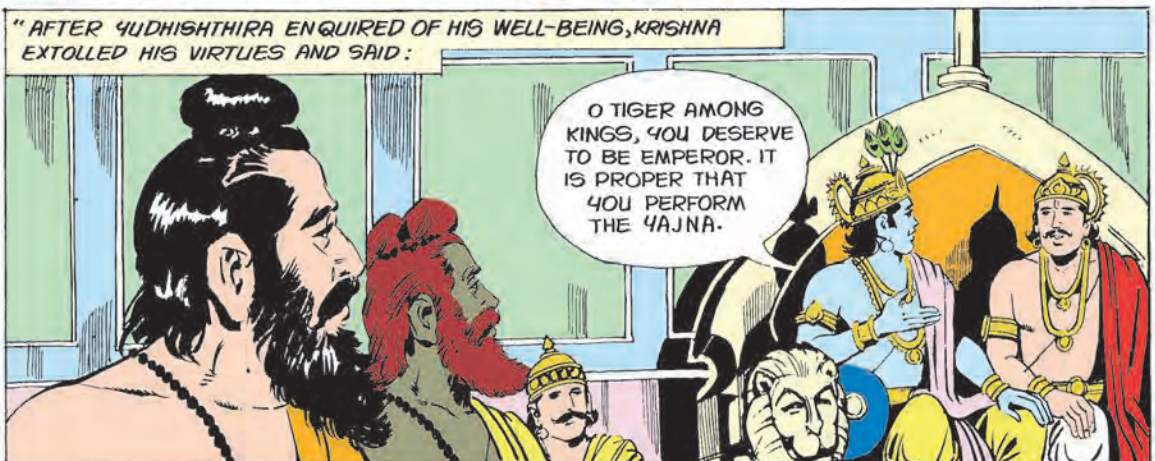
"KRISHNA APPEARED WHILE THEY WERE SPEAKING THIS —

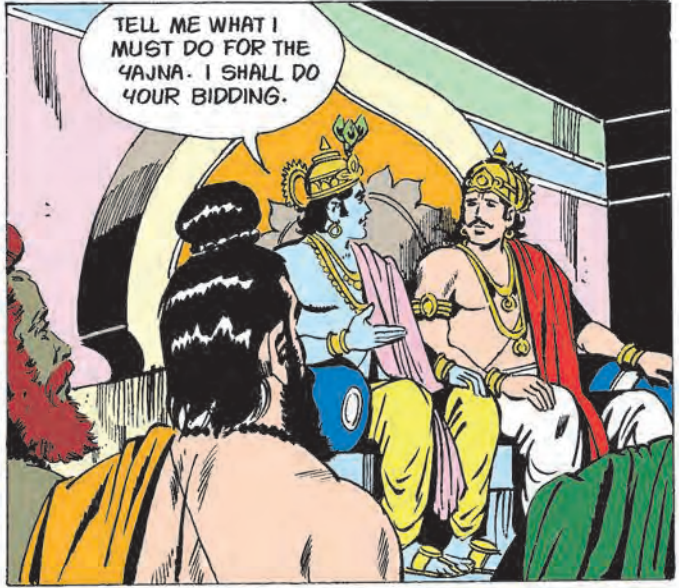
"YUDHISHTHIRA RESPECTFULLY WELCOMED KRISHNA, THE LORD OF THE PAST, THE FUTURE AND THE PRESENT.



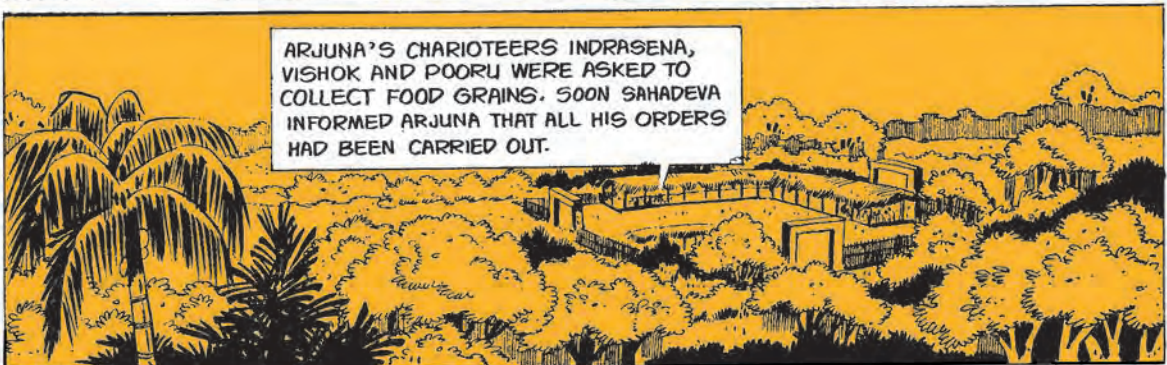
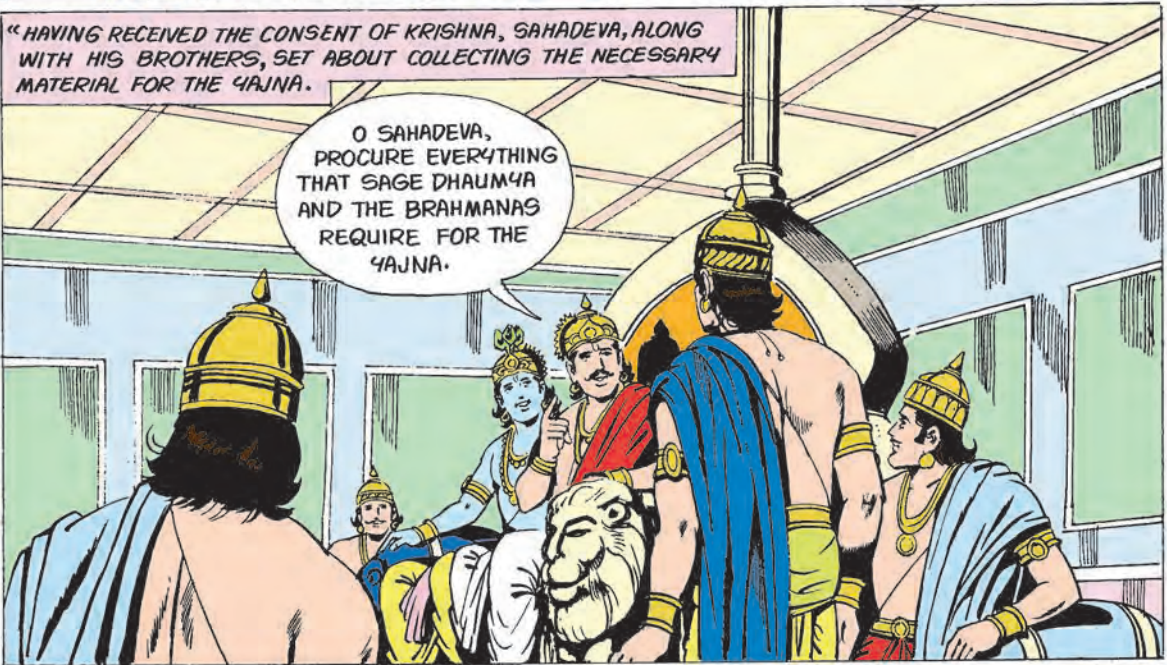
"AFTER YUDHISHTHIRA ENQUIRED OF HIS WELL-BEING, KRISHNA EXTOLLED HIS VIRTUES AND SAID :

O TIGER AMONG KINGS, YOU DESERVE TO BE EMPEROR. IT IS PROPER THAT YOU PERFORM THE YAJNA.





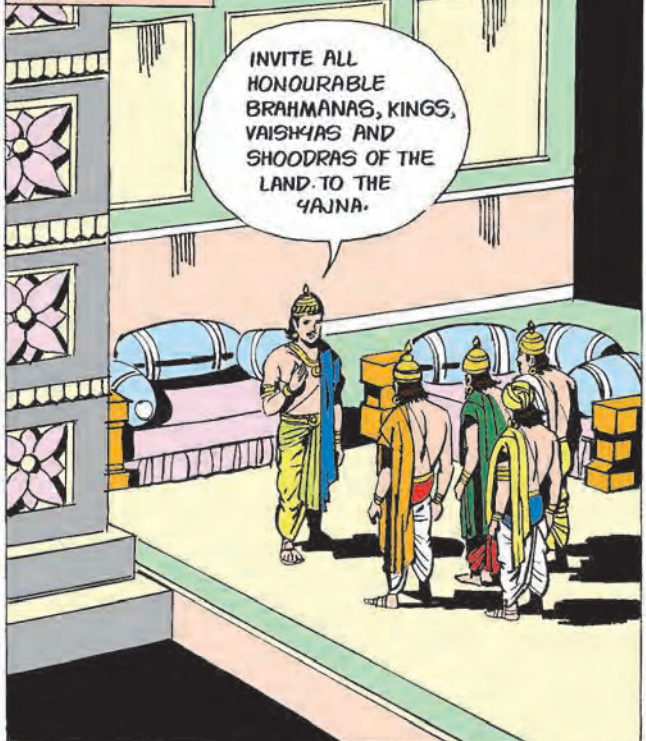
"HAVING RECEIVED THE CONSENT OF KRISHNA, SAHADEVA, ALONG WITH HIS BROTHERS, SET ABOUT COLLECTING THE NECESSARY MATERIAL FOR THE YAJNA.



"THEN, YUDHISHTHIRA, THE SUPREME ONE
AMONG THE KINGS AND OF THE KURU RACE,
SADE SAHADEVA —



"SAHADEVA ACCORDINGLY DESPATCHED THE
MESSENGERS —

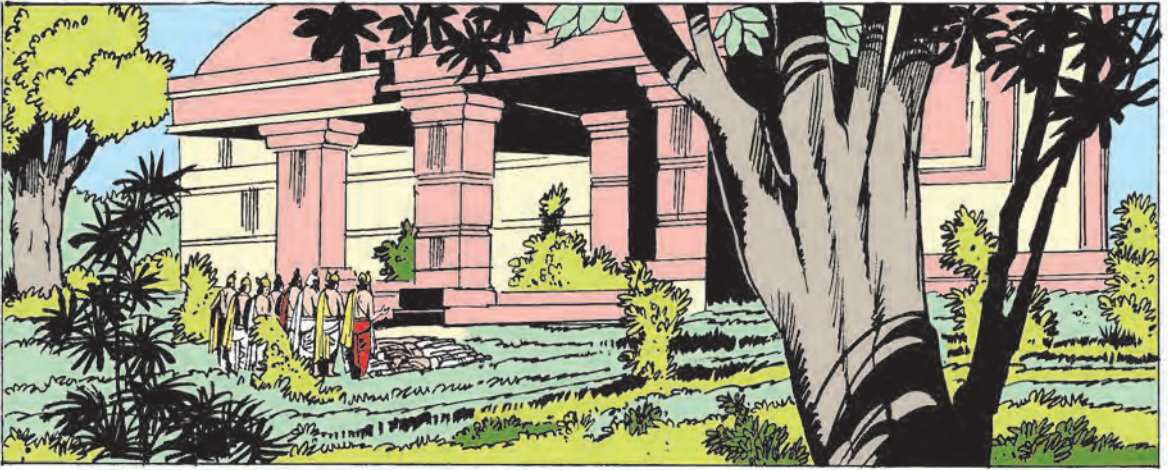


"NAKULA WAS SENT TO INVITE BHEESHMA, DRONA,
DHRTARASHTRA, VIDURA, KRIPA AND THE
KAURAVAS.

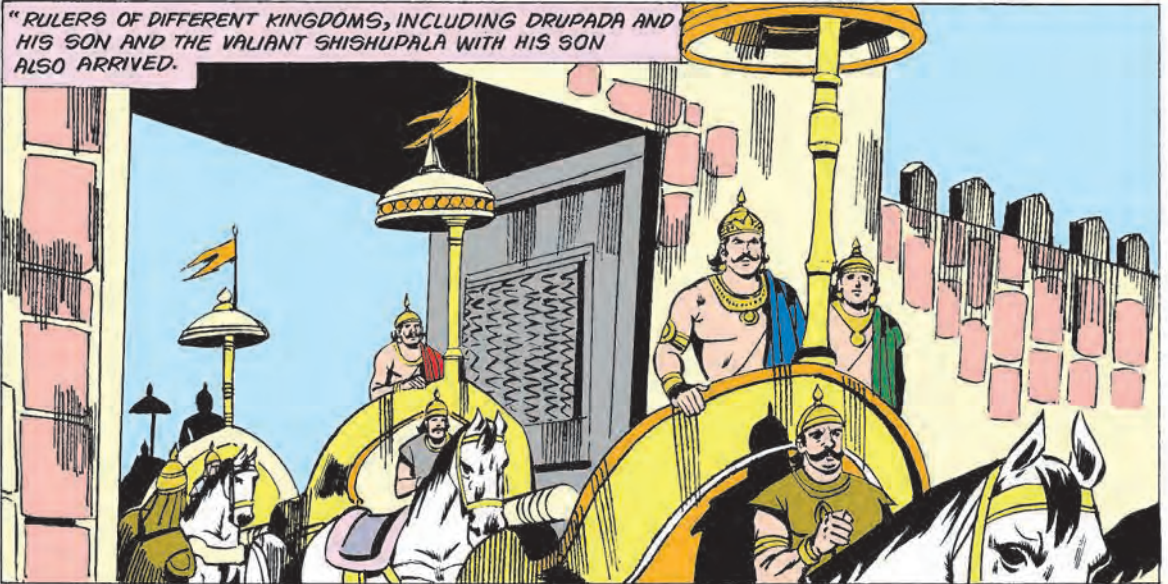


"ALL THE INVITEES ARRIVED IN A JOYOUS MOOD.





"RULERS OF DIFFERENT KINGDOMS, INCLUDING DRUPADA AND HIS SON AND THE VALIANT SHISHUPALA WITH HIS SON ALSO ARRIVED."



"ADDRESSING BHEESHMA, DRONA, KRIPA, ASHWATTHAMA AND DURYODHANA, YUDHISHTHIRA SAID—"

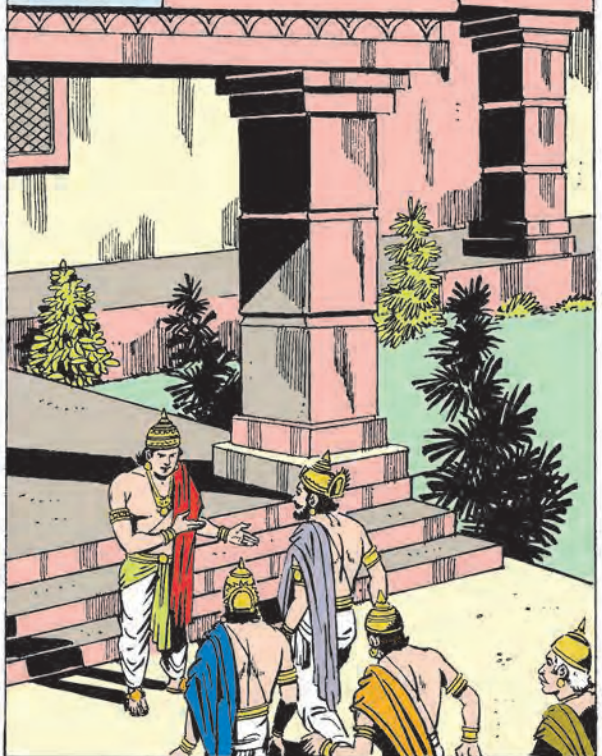


KINDLY
TREAT ME AND
MY WEALTH AS YOUR
OWN AND GUIDE ME
IN THE CONDUCT OF
THE YAJNA.

"YUDHISHTHIRA ASSIGNED DUTIES PERTAINING TO THE YAJNA TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE. DUKSHASANA WAS ASSIGNED THE TASK OF FEEDING THE INVITEES."



"SANJAYA WAS APPOINTED TO LOOK AFTER THE PROTOCOL."

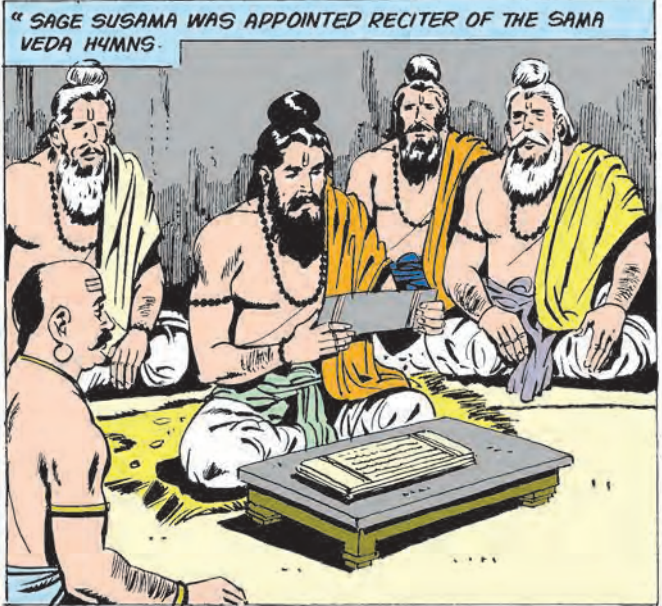


"THE SAFE-KEEPING OF THE DIAMONDS, GOLD AND GEMS AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF GIFTS TO BRAHMANAS WERE ENTRUSTED TO KRIPA."

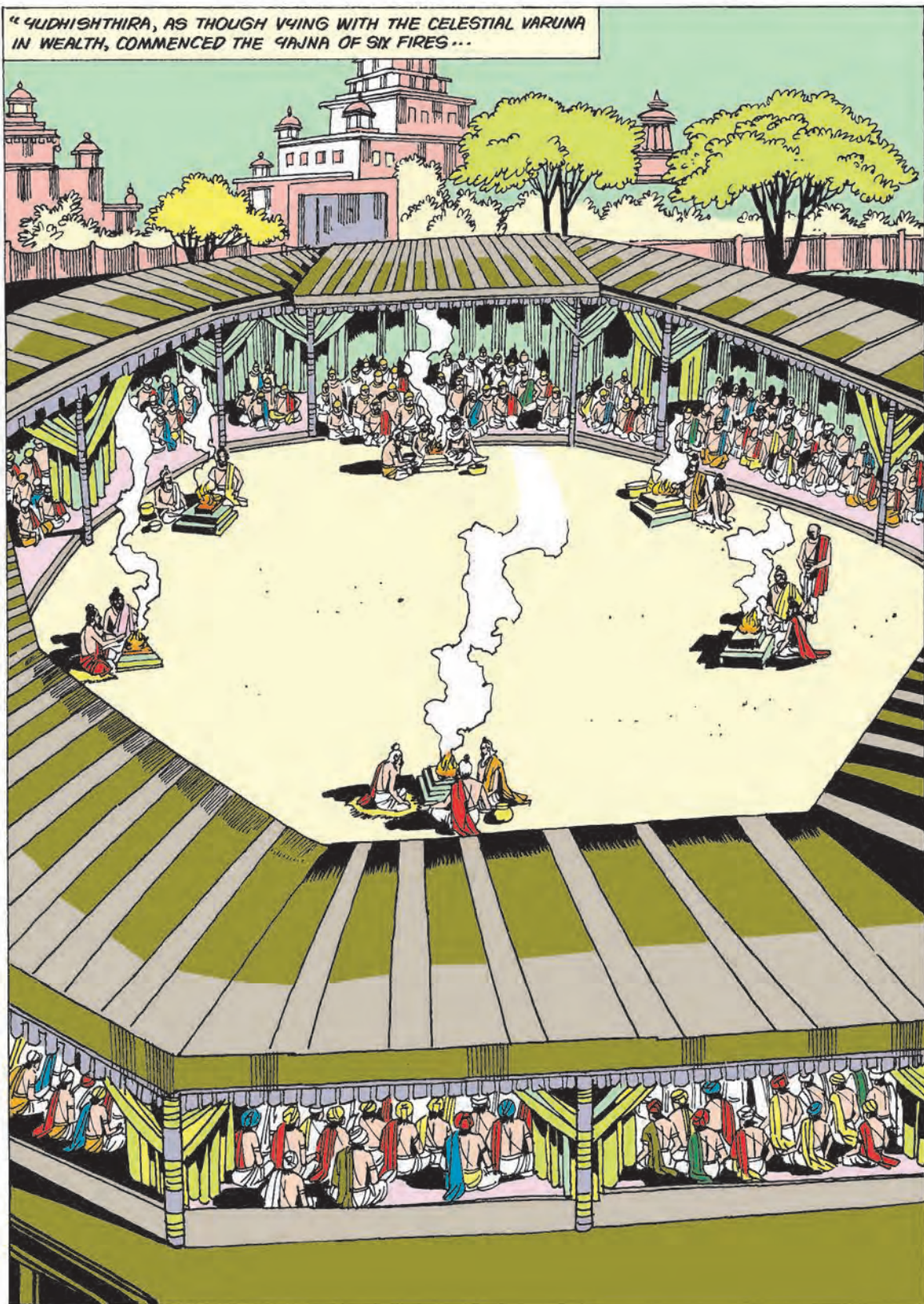


"THE GREAT AND WISE BHEESHMA AND DRONA WERE ASKED TO ENSURE THAT ALL THE DUTIES ASSIGNED WERE PROPERLY CARRIED OUT."

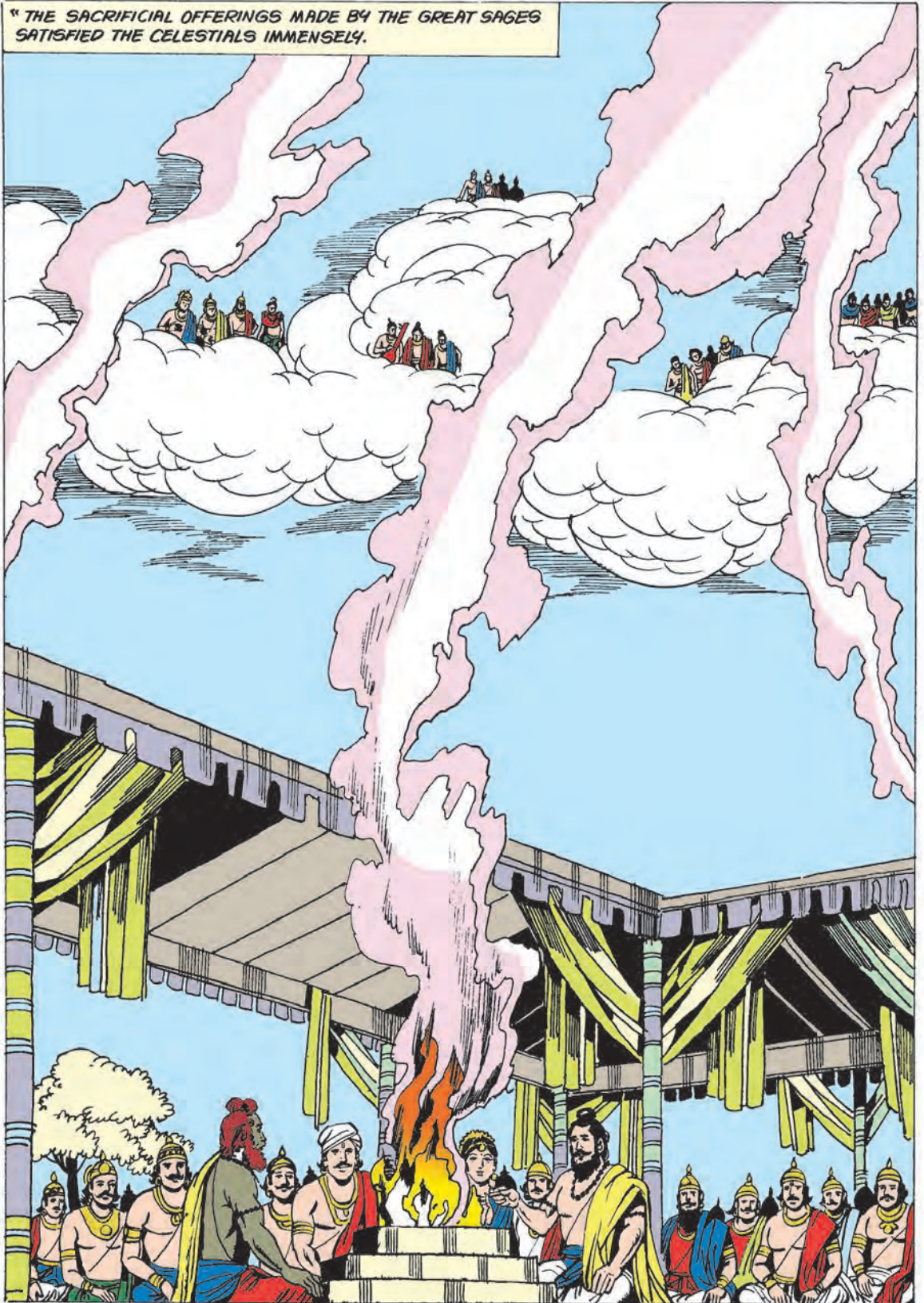




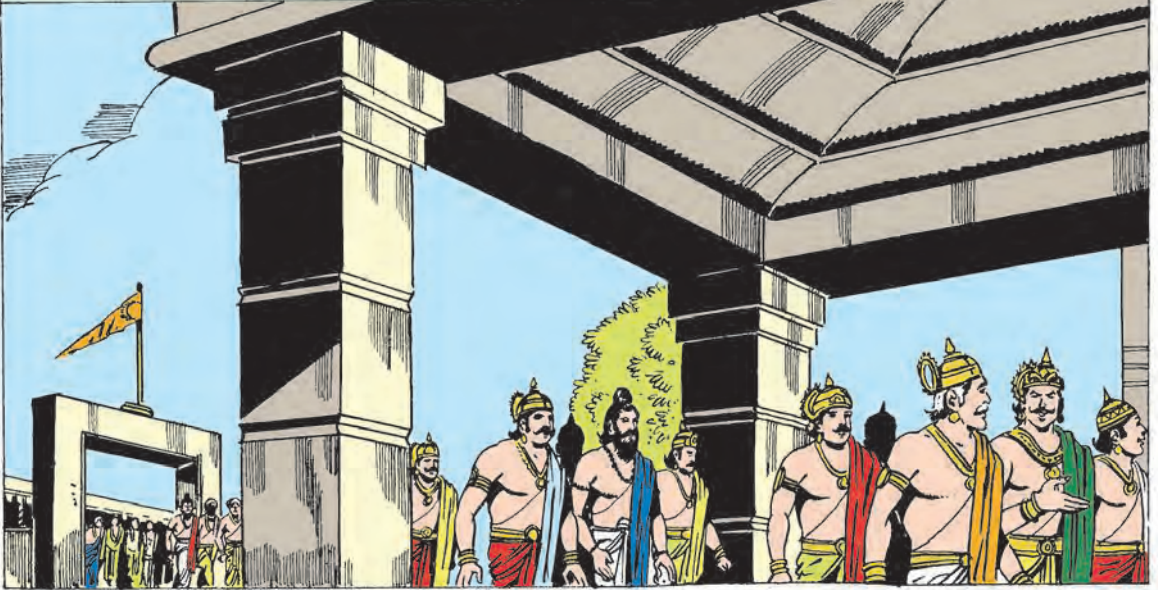
"YUDHISHTHIRA, AS THOUGH VYING WITH THE CELESTIAL VARUNA
IN WEALTH, COMMENCED THE YAJNA OF SIX FIRES ...



"THE SACRIFICIAL OFFERINGS MADE BY THE GREAT SAGES
SATISFIED THE CELESTIALS IMMENSELY."



"ON THE DAY OF THE CEREMONIAL BATH, THE BRAHMANAS, ALONG WITH THE KINGS, ENTERED THE INNER QUARTERS OF THE SACRIFICIAL MANSION TO RECEIVE HONOURS.

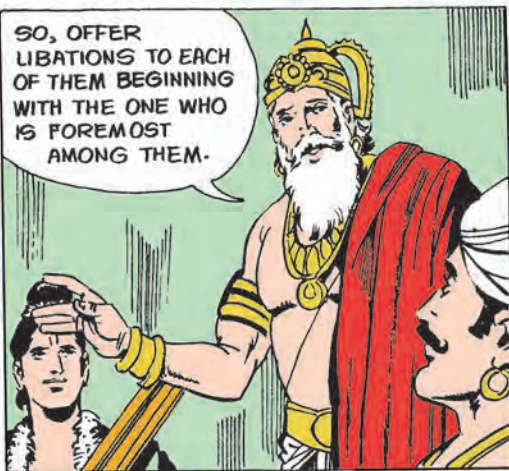
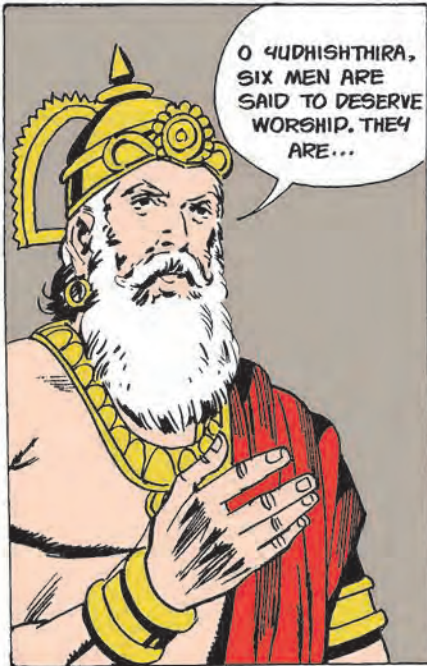


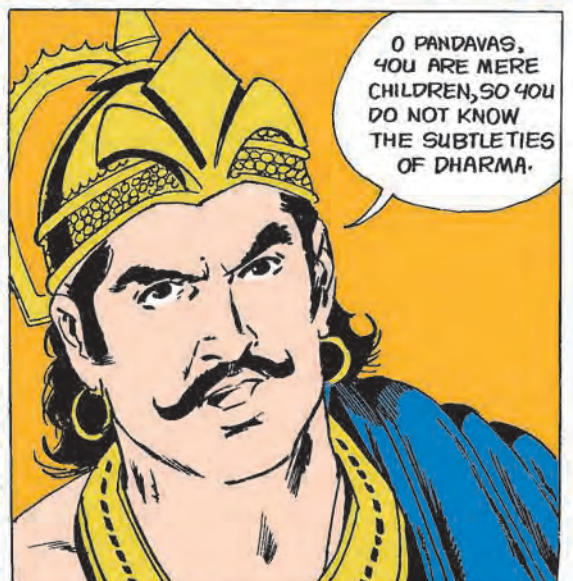
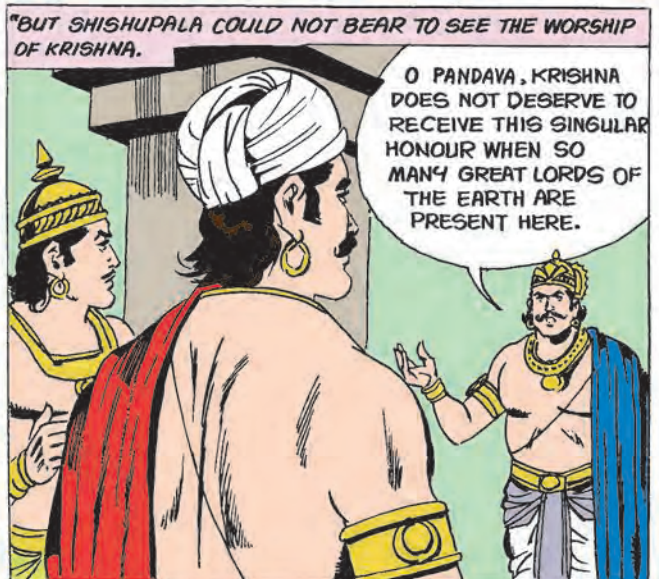
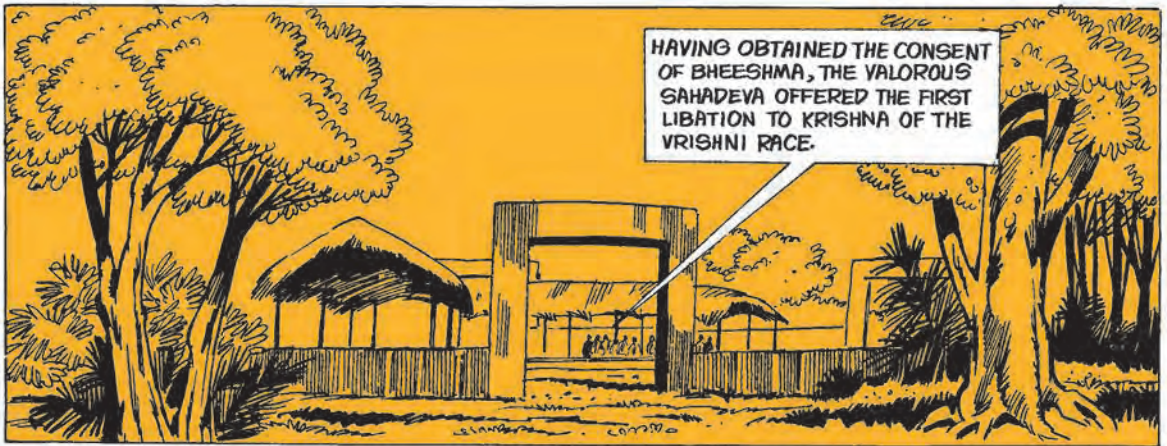
"GRACED BY THE PRESENCE OF NARADA, THE FOREMOST AMONG SAGES, AND THE SAINTLY KINGS, THE ASSEMBLY IN THE SACRIFICIAL MANSION WAS AS GLORIOUS AS THE ASSEMBLY OF BRAHMA* THERE BHEESHMA ADDRESSED YUDHISHTHIRA —

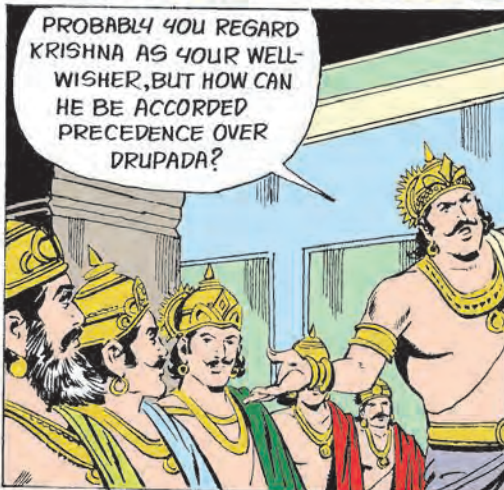
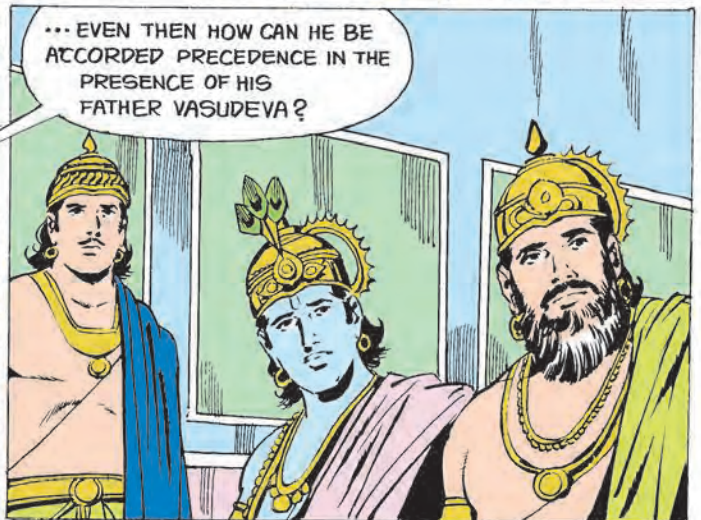


* THE CREATOR, ACCORDING TO HINDU MYTHOLOGY.

† DESCENDANT OF BHARATA







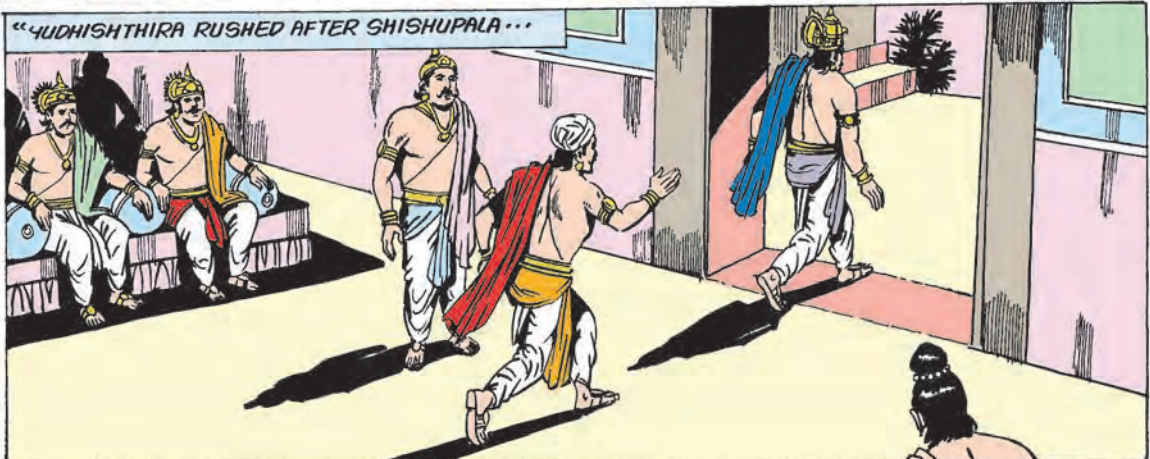




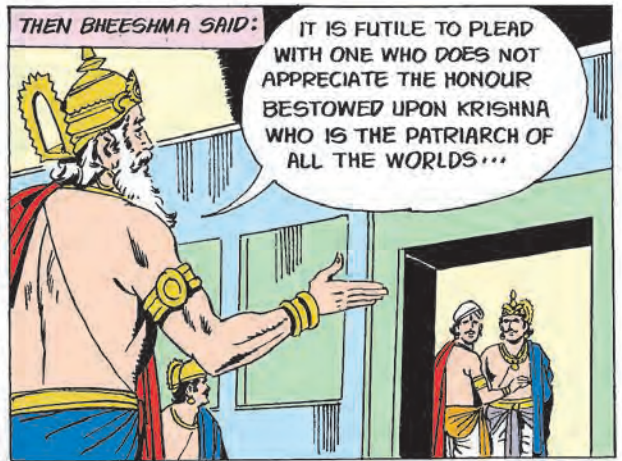
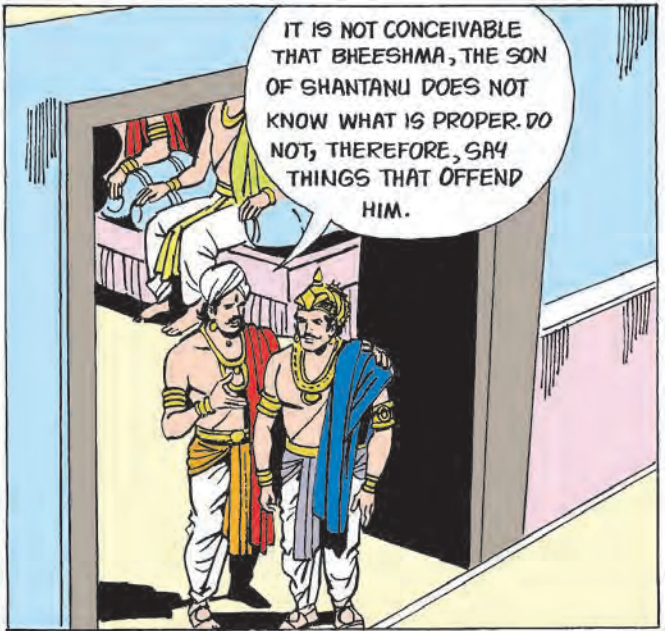
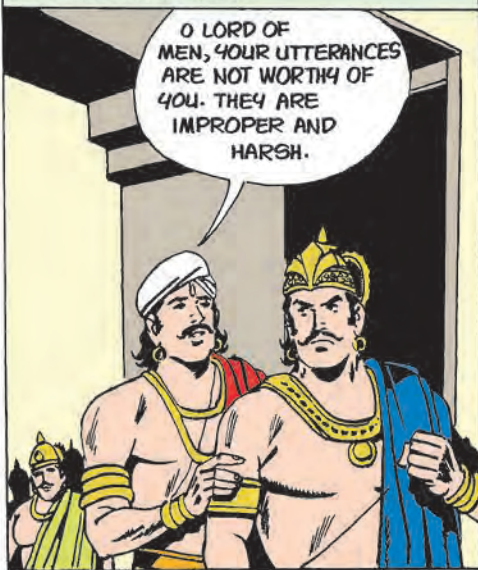
"SPEAKING THUS, SHISHUPALA WALKED OUT OF THE ASSEMBLY."

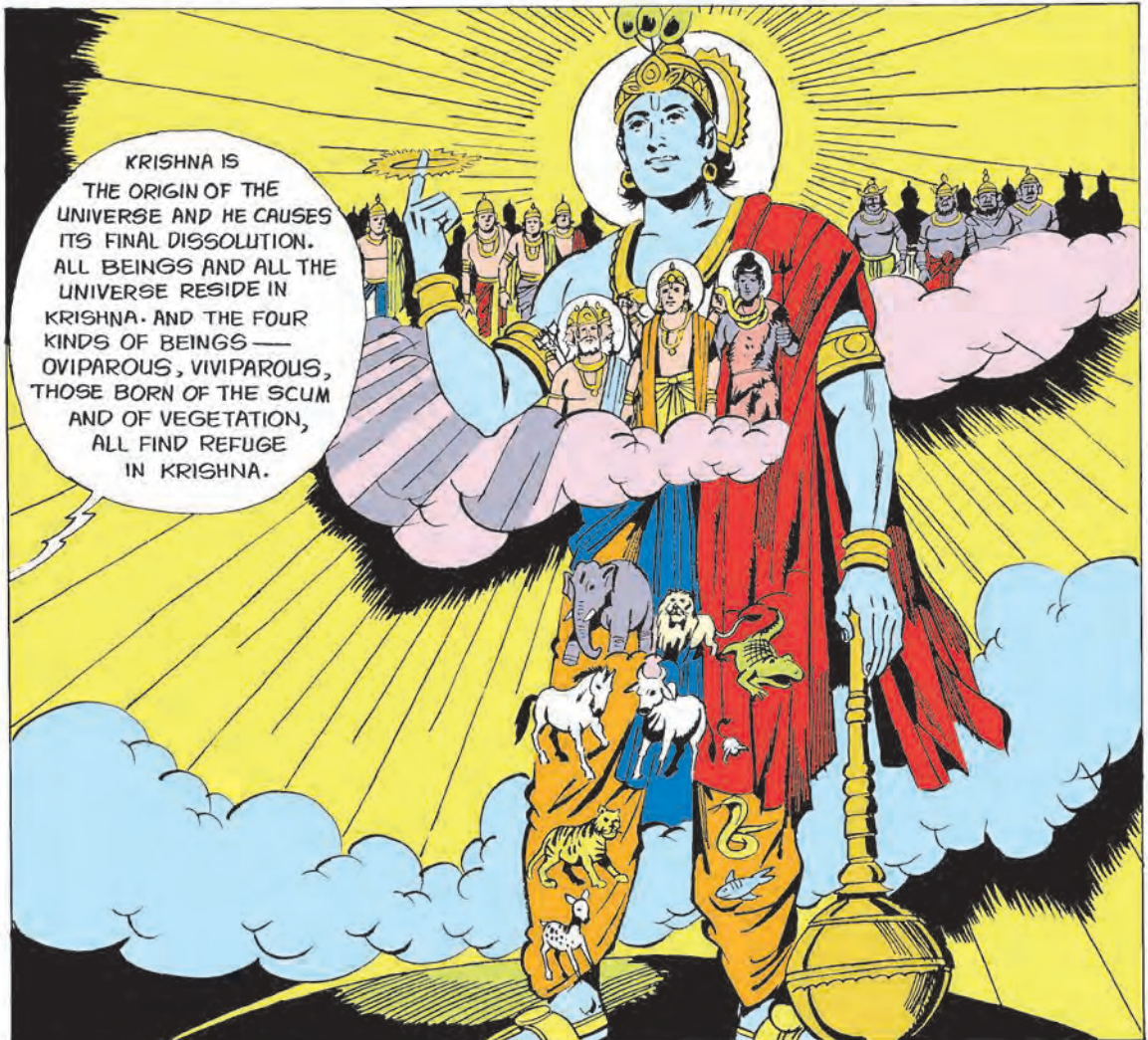
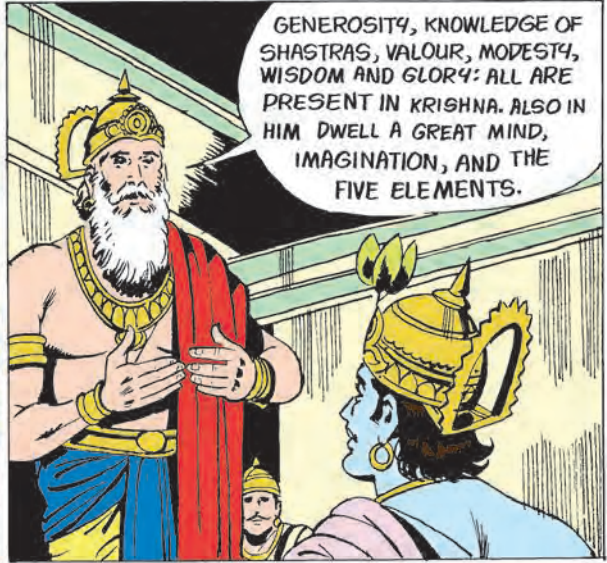
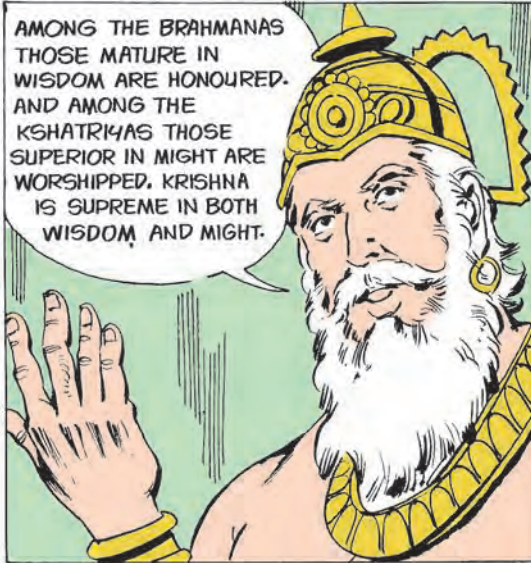


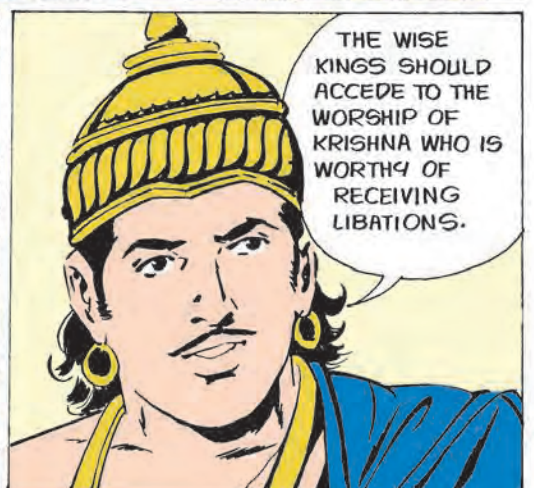
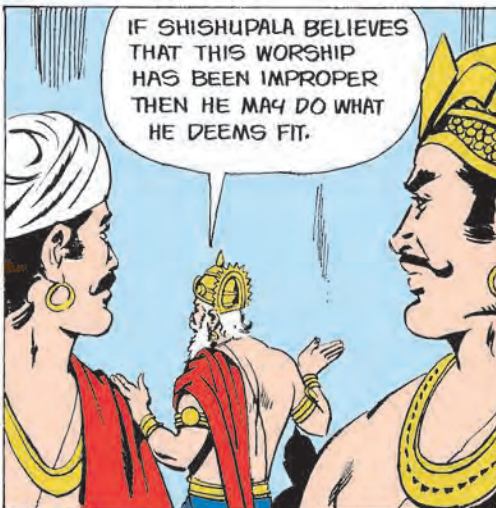
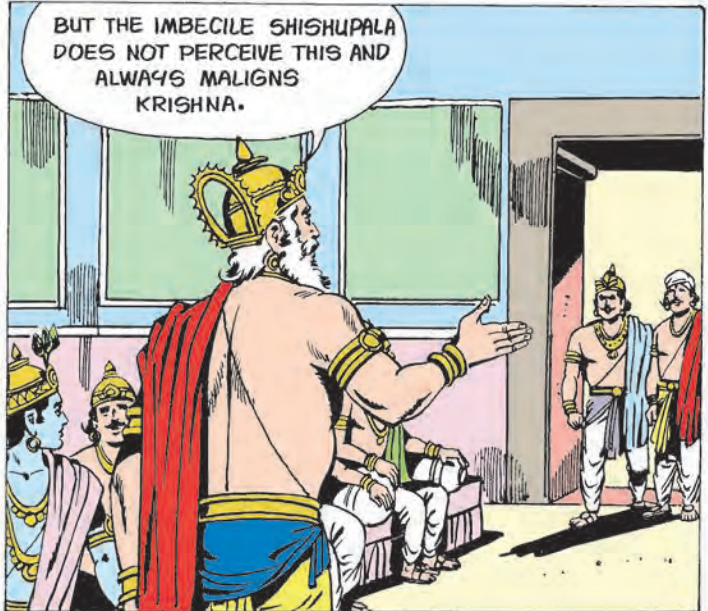
"YUDHISHTHIRA RUSHED AFTER SHISHUPALA..."



"... AND PACIFIED HIM WITH THESE WORDS
UTTERED PLEASANTLY —







"EVEN WHEN SAHADEVA RAISED HIS FOOT, NONE OF THE KINGS UTTERED A WORD. THEN CELESTIALS HAILED HIS ACTION AND SHOWERED FLOWERS ON HIM."

WELL DONE!
WELL DONE!

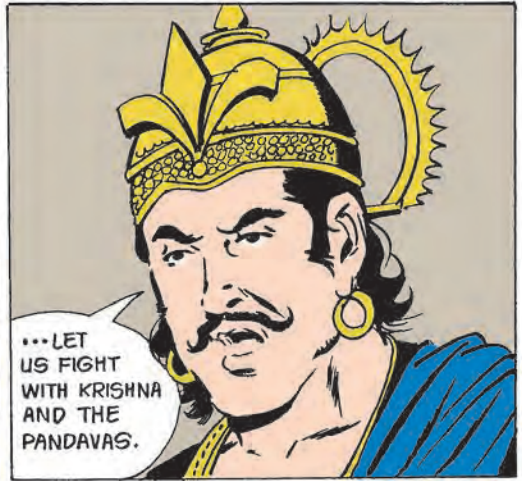


"BUT THE FACES OF MANY KINGS DARKENED WITH ANGER. SHISHUPALA, WHOSE EYES BECAME BLOODSHOT WITH RAGE, SAID:

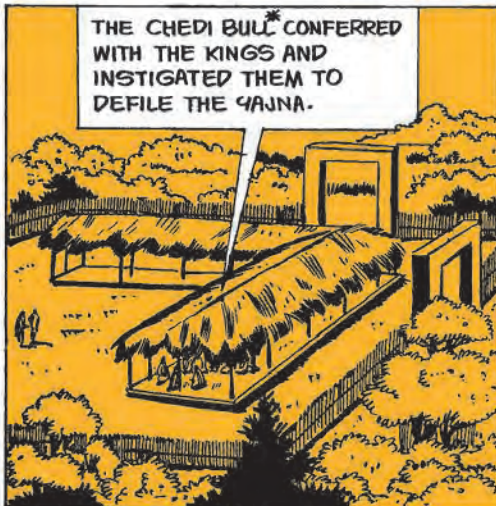
O KINGS,
I AM STANDING
HERE TO LEAD
YOU...



...LET
US FIGHT
WITH KRISHNA
AND THE
PANDAVAS.

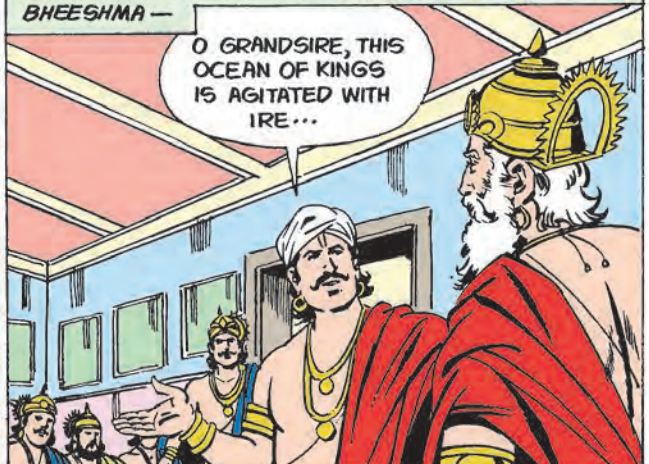


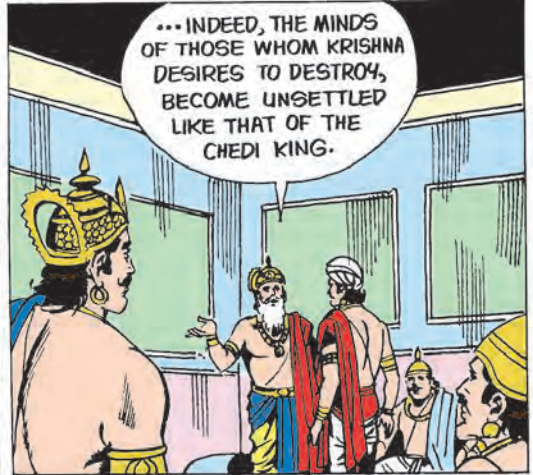
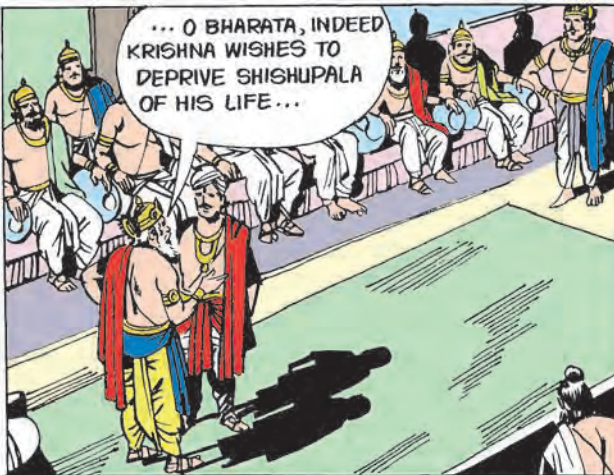
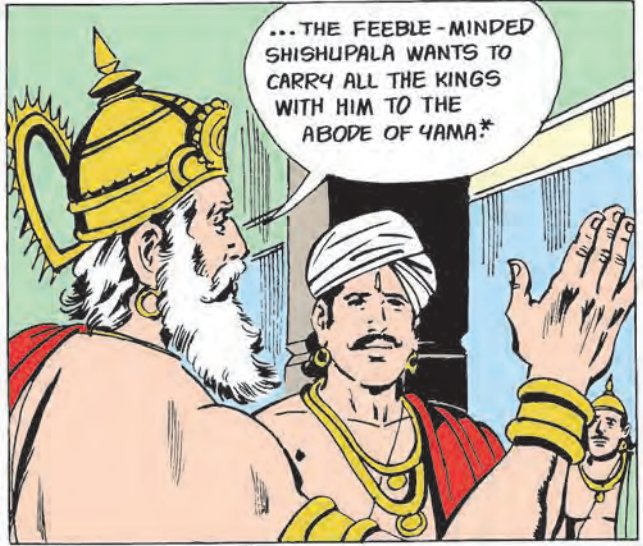
THE CHEDI BULL* CONFERRED
WITH THE KINGS AND
INSTIGATED THEM TO
DEFILE THE YAJNA.



"BEHOLDING THE ANGRY KINGS, YUDHISHTHIRA ASKED
BHEESHMA —

O GRANDSIRE, THIS
OCEAN OF KINGS
IS AGITATED WITH
IRE...

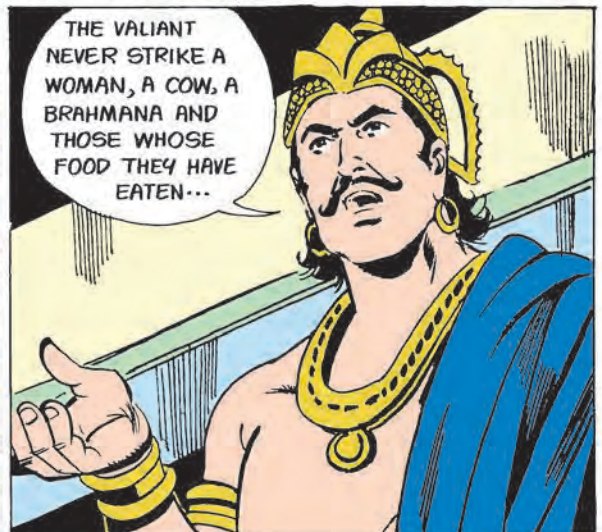
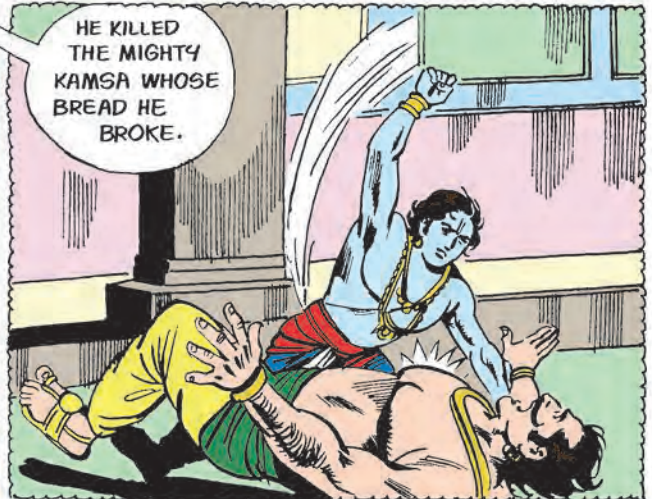
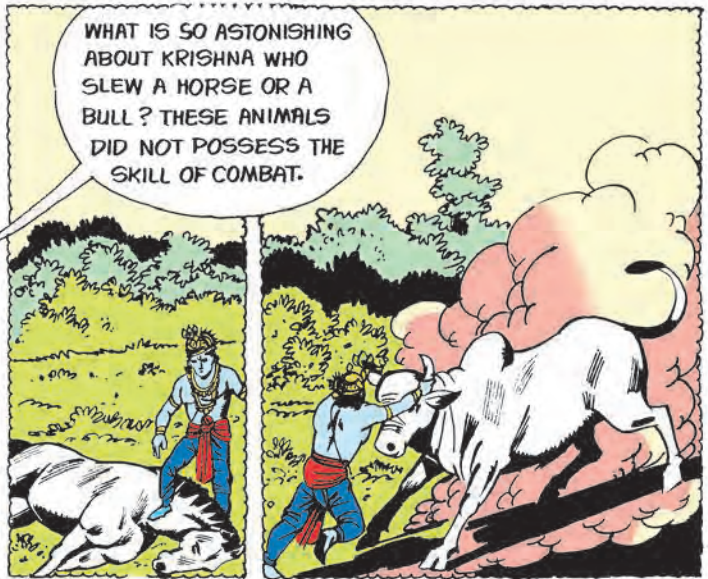
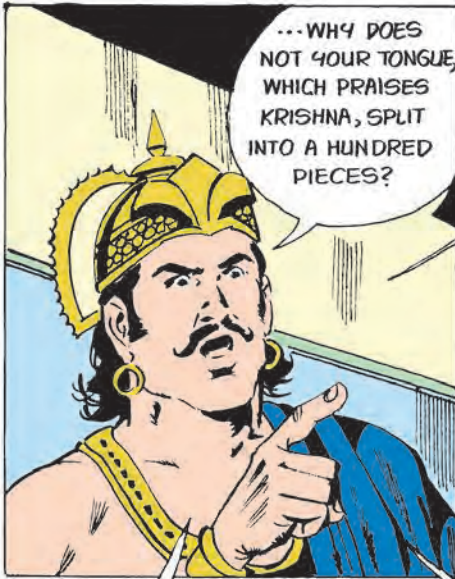


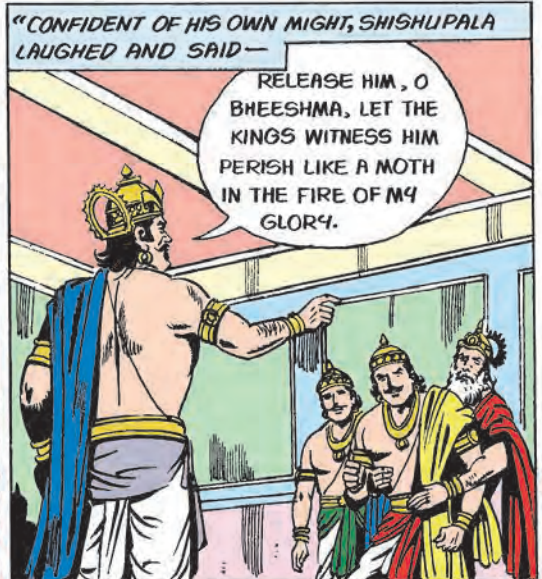
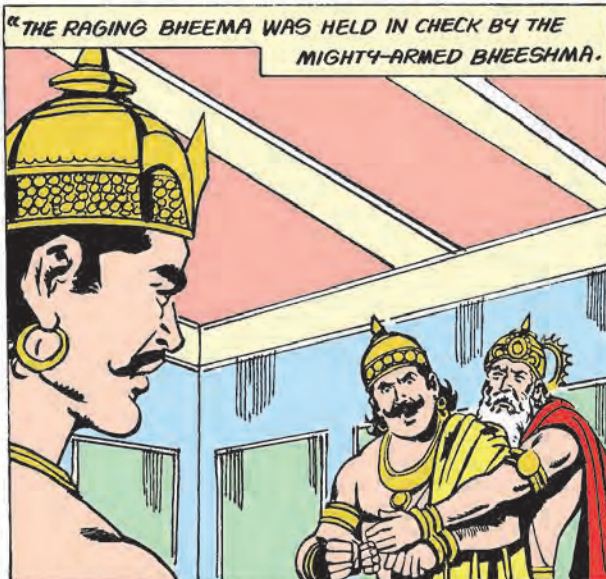
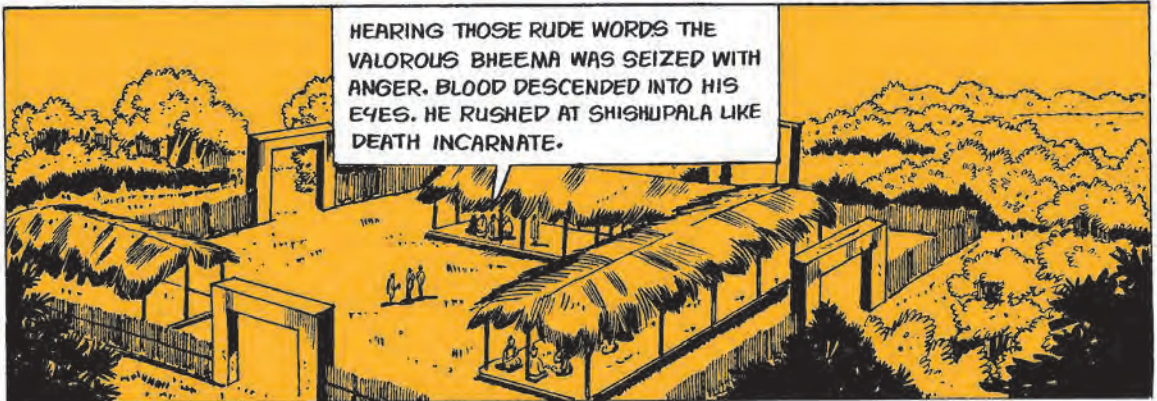
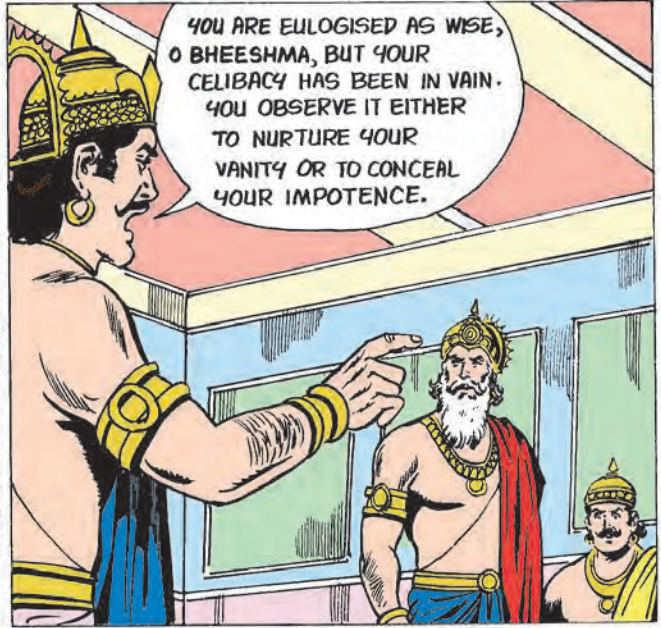


"LISTENING TO THESE WORDS THE CHEDI KING ADDRESSED BHEESHMA IN RUDE WORDS—



* THE GOD OF DEATH.

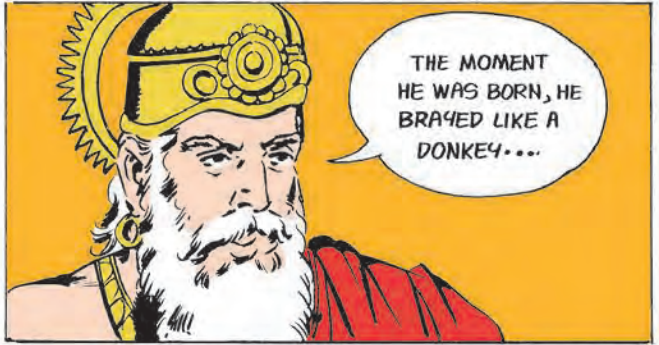


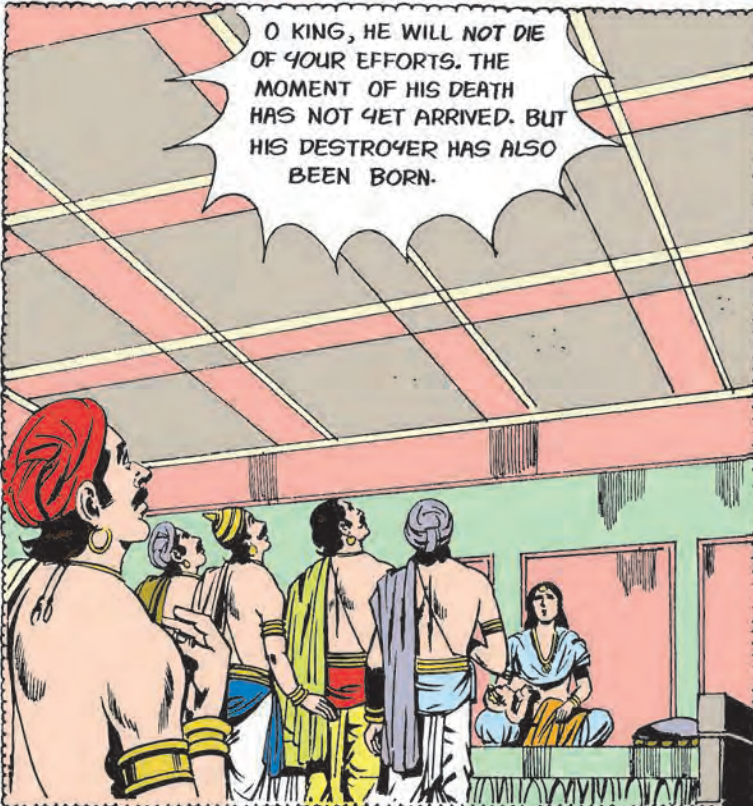
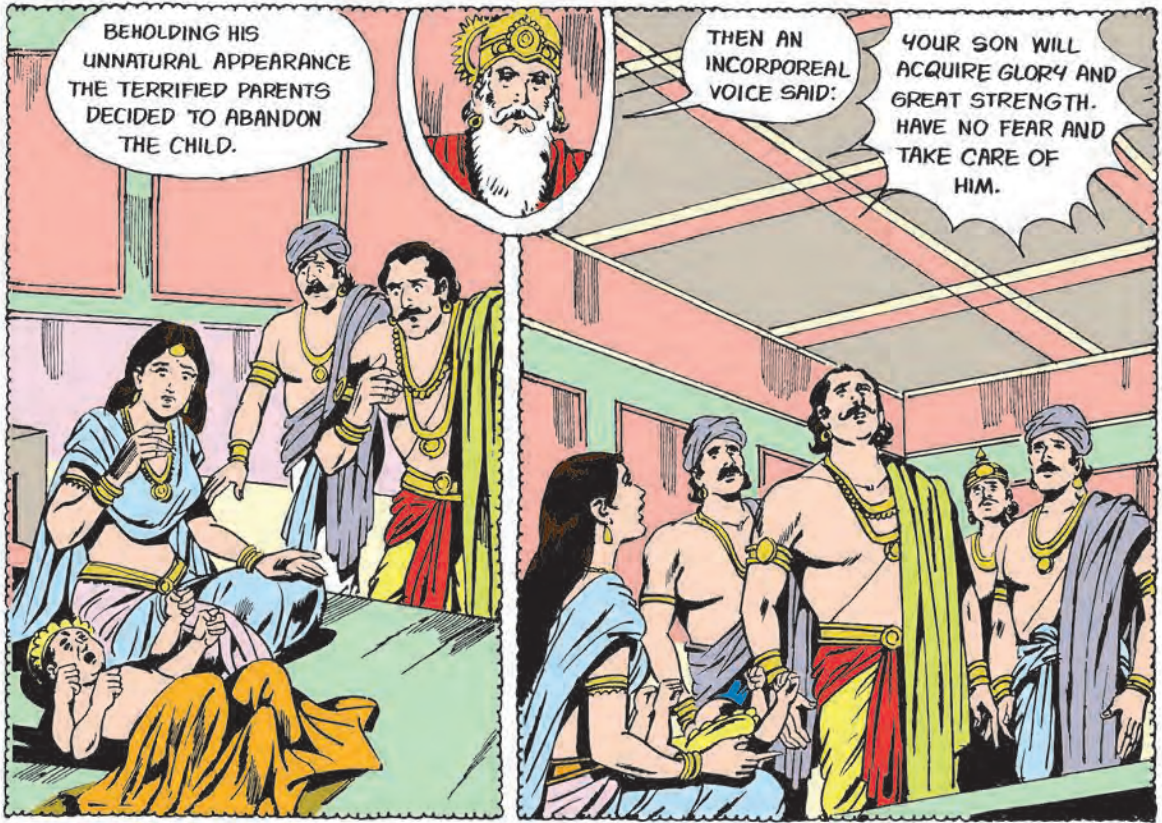


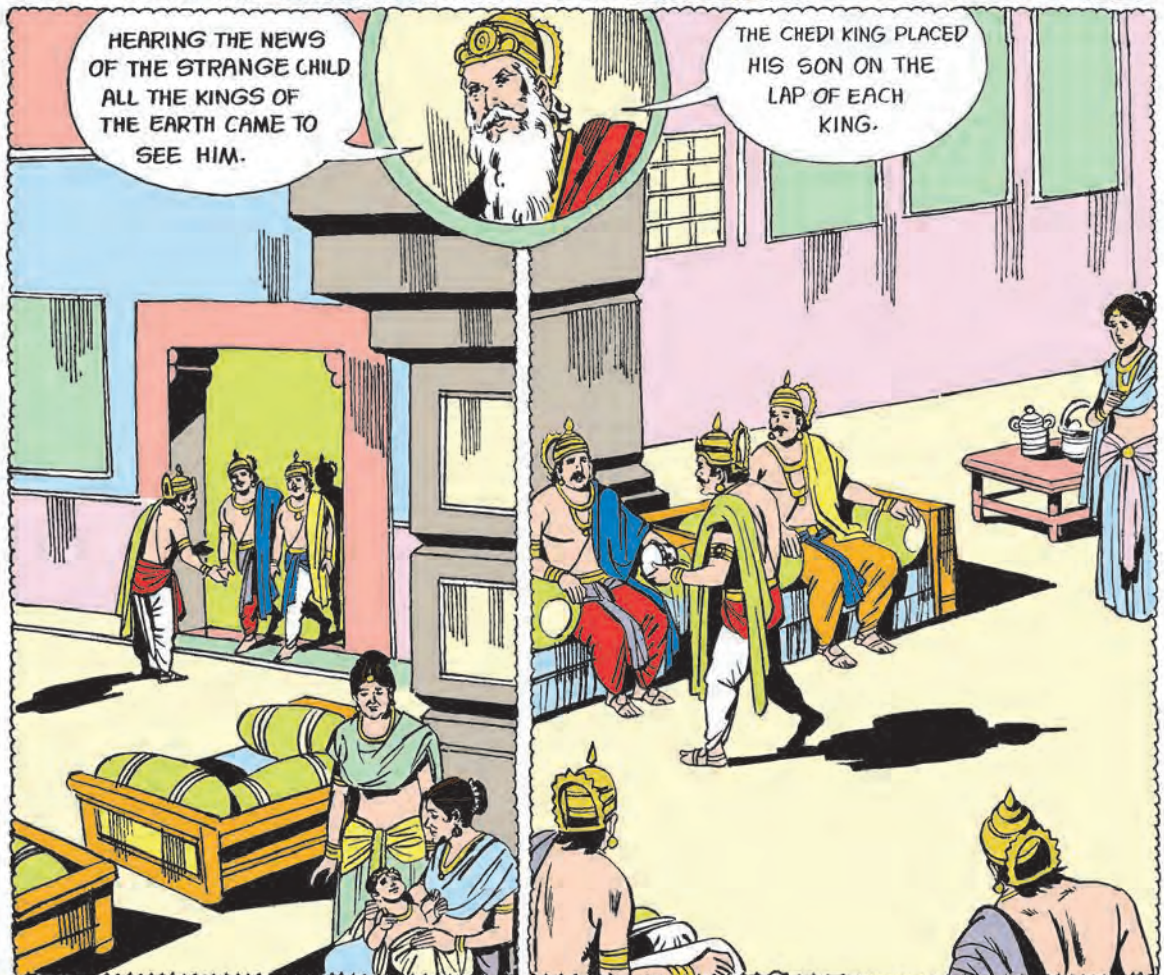
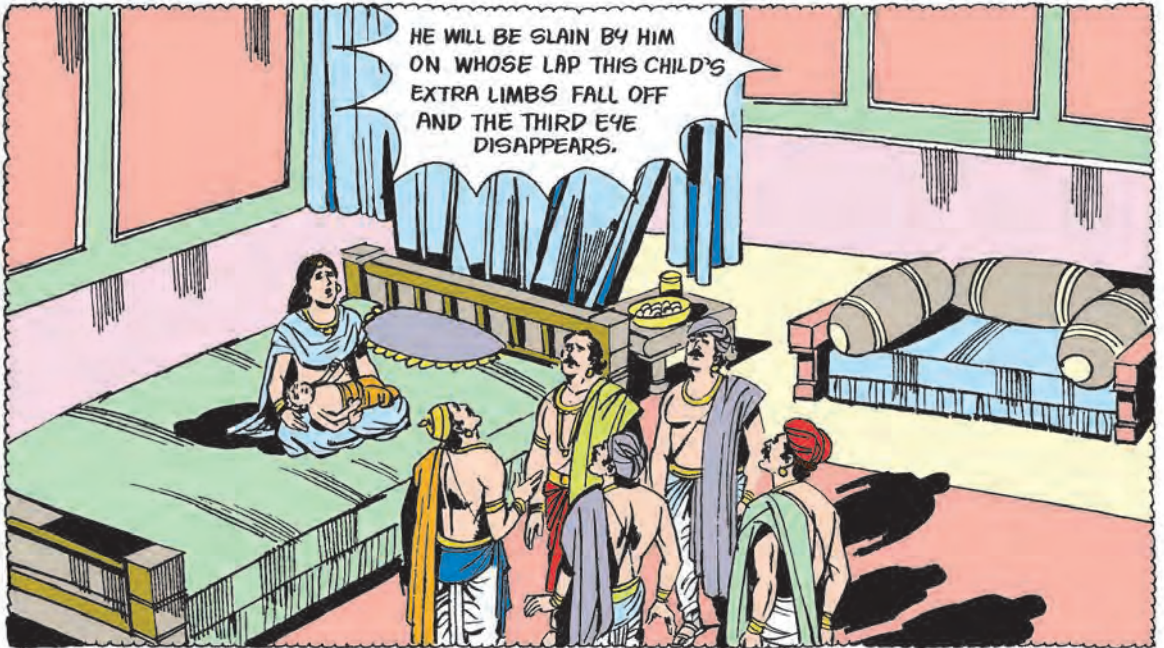
* DEMONESS POOTANA.

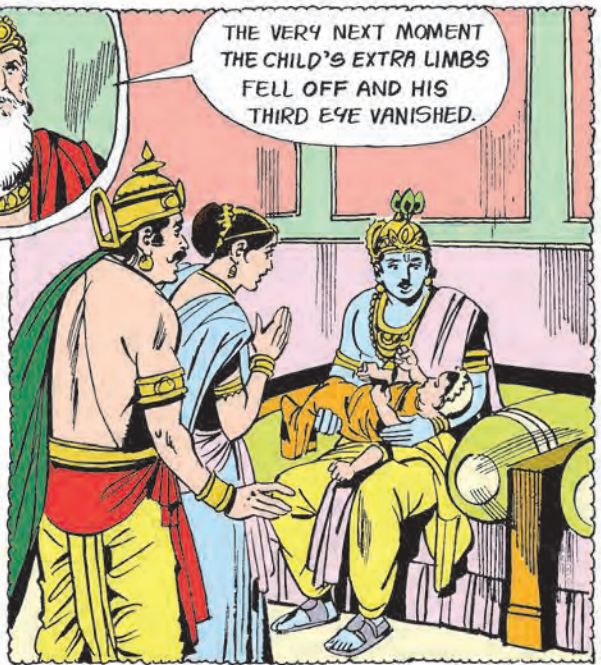
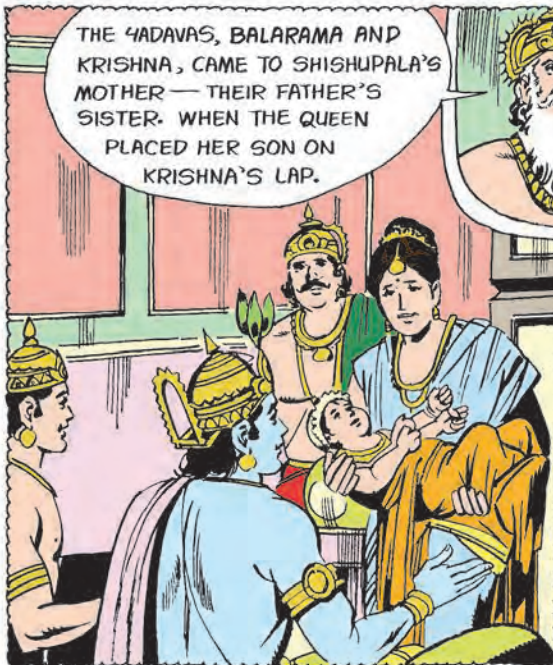
† KRISHNA HAD KILLED AN ASURA NAMED DHENUKA WHO WAS IN THE GUISE OF A BULL.

HEARING THESE WORDS OF THE CHEDI KING, BHEESHMA OF MATCHLESS WISDOM TOLD THE STORY OF SHISHUPALA.



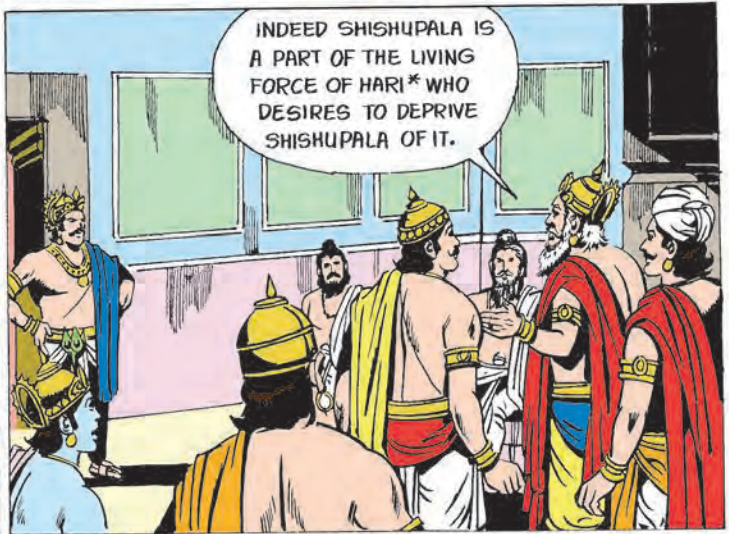
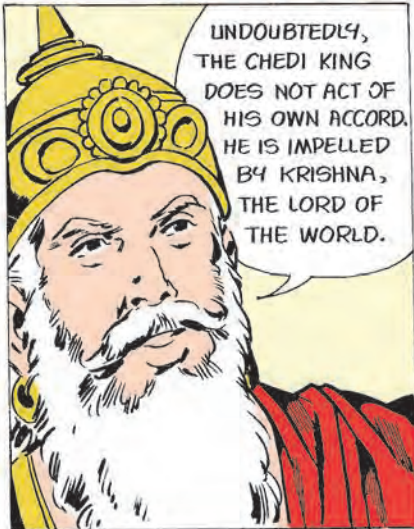
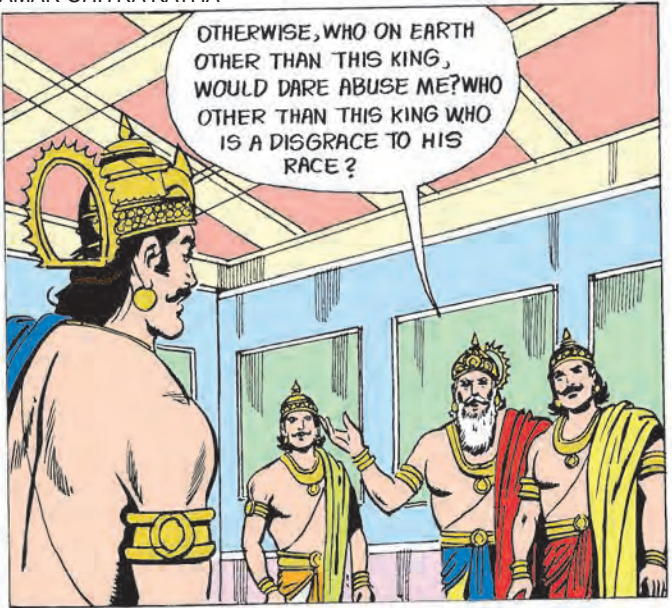






BEHOLDING THIS THE DISTRESSED QUEEN SAID :

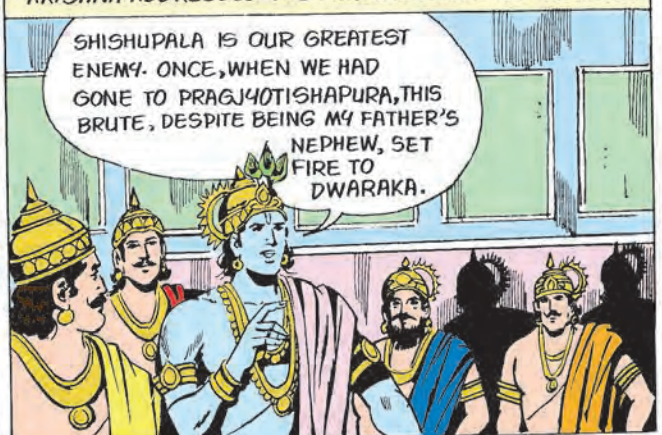


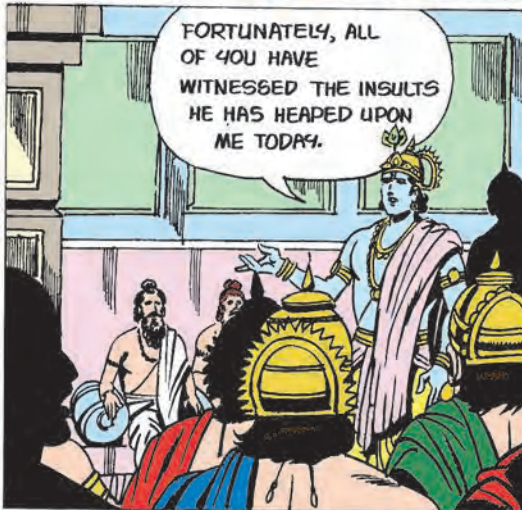


"INCENSED BY THE WORDS OF BHEESHMA THE RECKLESS CHEDI KING SAID TO KRISHNA —



"KRISHNA ADDRESSED THE PANDAVAS AND ALL THE KINGS.





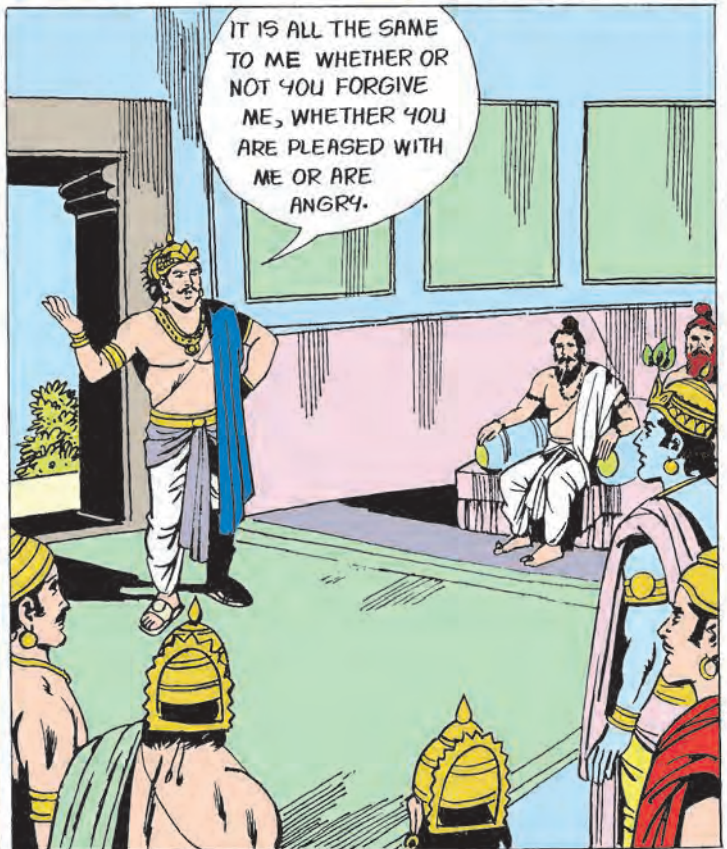
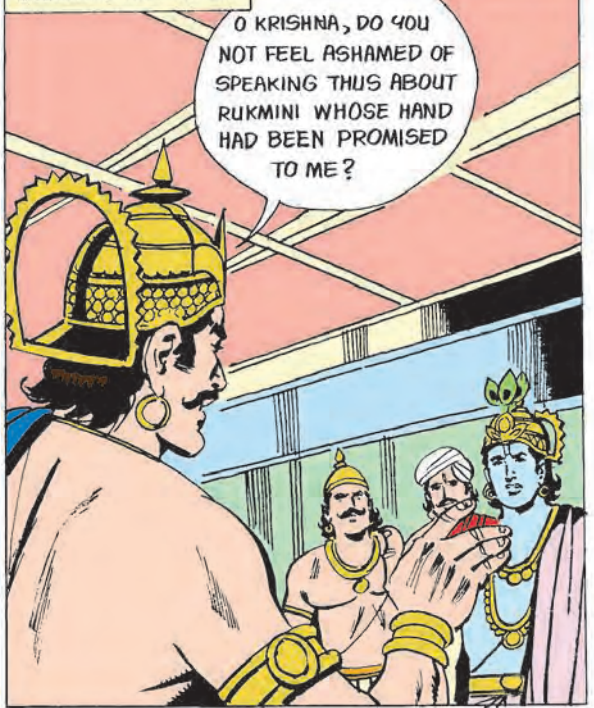
† HORSE SACRIFICE.

* THE PRINCIPAL QUEEN OF KRISHNA.

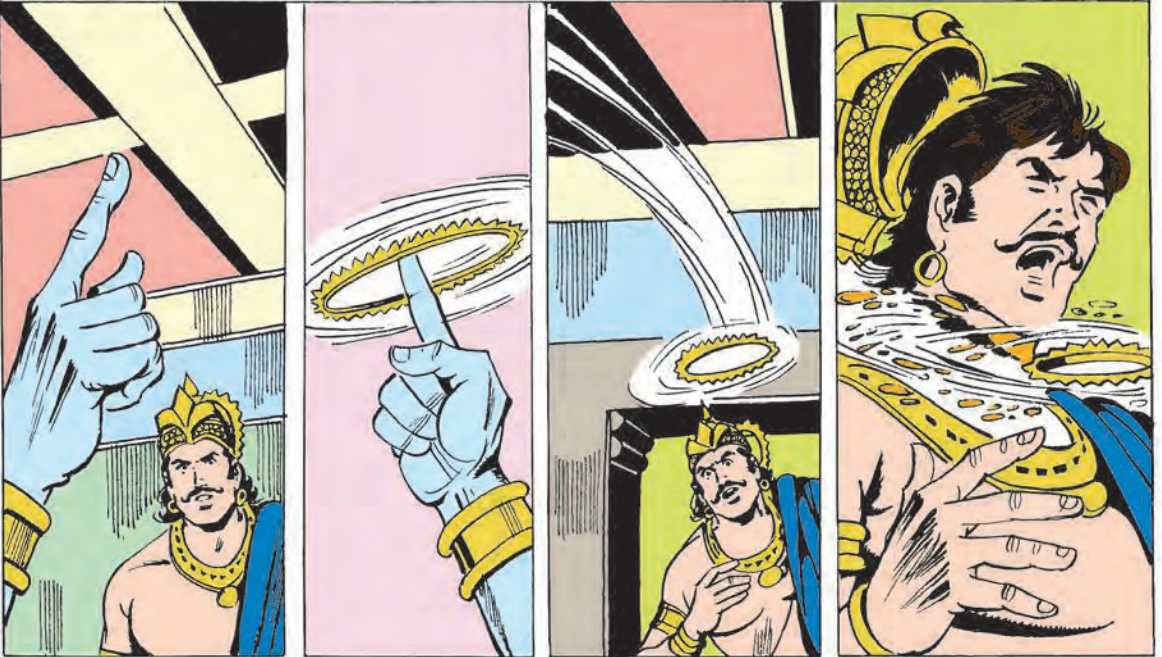
THE KINGS PRESENT IN THE ASSEMBLY CONDEMNED SHISHUPALA'S MISDEEDS.



"LISTENING TO THOSE WORDS SHISHUPALA LAUGHED AND SAID:



"WHILE SHISHUPALA WAS UTTERING THESE WORDS, LORD KRISHNA BEHEADED HIM WITH HIS DISCUS."



"SHISHUPALA FELL TO THE GROUND LIKE A MOUNTAIN UPROOTED BY VAJRA*. A BRILLIANT LIGHT EMERGED FROM HIS BODY AND..."



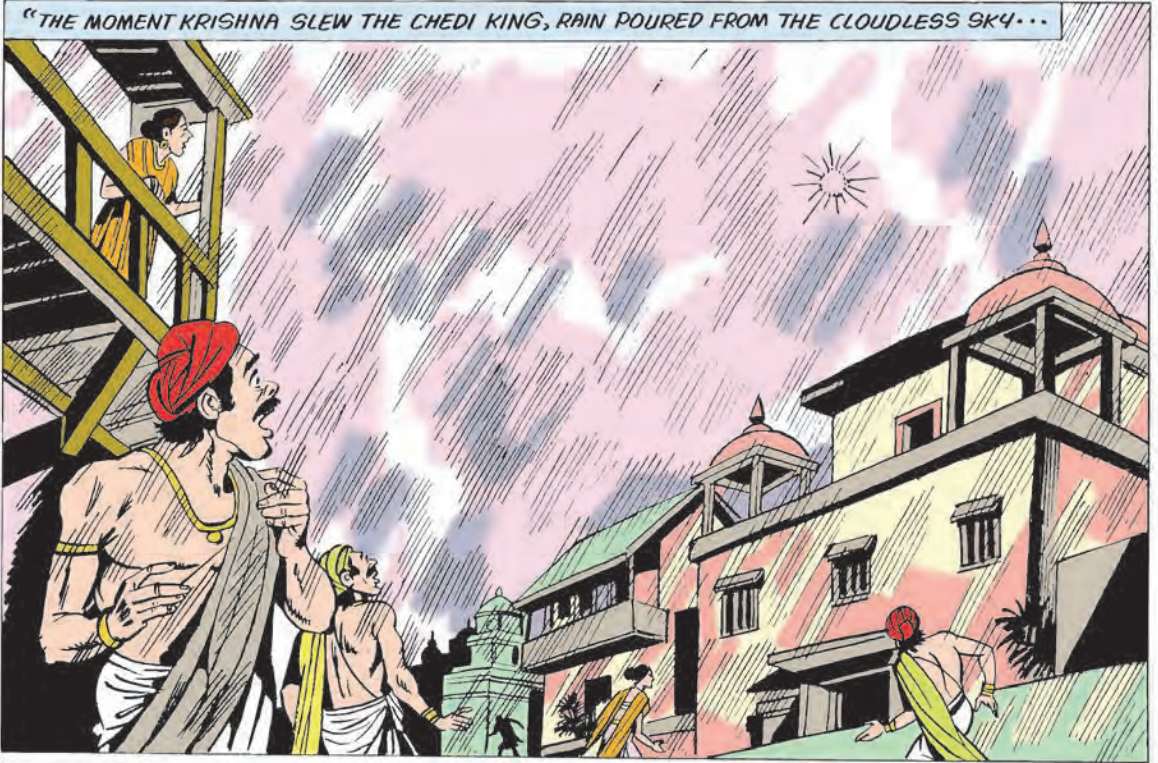
"... THEN IT MERGED WITH THE BODY OF PURUSHOTTAMA®."



* THE WEAPON OF INDRA

® THE LORD OF MEN — KRISHNA.

"THE MOMENT KRISHNA SLEW THE CHEDI KING, RAIN POURED FROM THE CLOUDLESS SKY..."



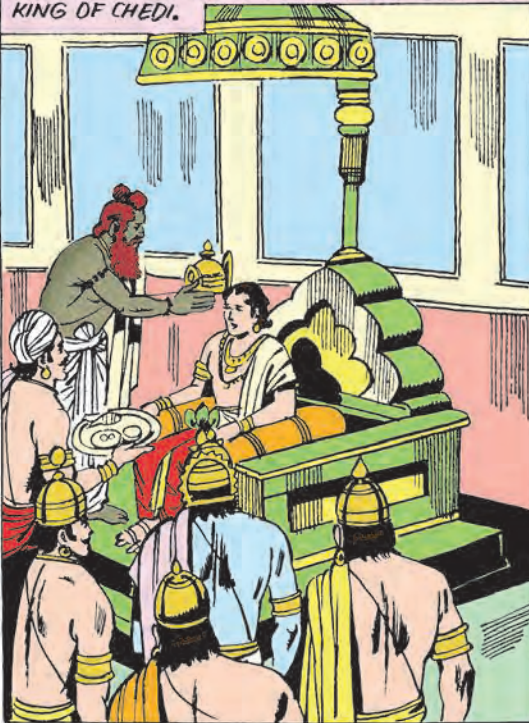
"METEORS FELL AND..."



"THE EARTH TREMBLED."



"YUDHISHTHIRA ASKED HIS BROTHERS TO PERFORM THE LAST RITES OF SHISHUPALA. THEN SHISHUPALA'S SON WAS CROWNED THE KING OF CHEDI."



"IN DUE TIME YUDHISHTHIRA COMPLETED THE GREAT RAJASOOYA YAJNA. THE MIGHTY ARMED KRISHNA BEARING THE CONCH, THE DISCUS AND THE MACE, PROTECTED THE YAJNA TILL ITS CONCLUSION."



WHEN THE RAJASOOYA YAJNA WAS COMPLETED ALL THE KINGS DEPARTED FOR THEIR KINGDOMS. KRISHNA WENT TO DWARAKA. ONLY DURYODHANA AND SHAKUNI CONTINUED TO STAY AT INDRAPRASTHA FOR SOME MORE TIME.



THUS ENDS THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF OUR RENDERING OF VAISHAMPAYANA'S RECITAL OF VYASA'S ITIHASA, THE MAHABHARATA.